

by Peter Beckford

(1781)

Referred to

C. Richardson's Bishopric in
"Thoughts on the Unity"

CHAIRMAN + JOHN ELLIOTT
("Abbey Election")



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ESSAYS

ON

HUNTING.

CONTAINING A

PHILOSOPHICAL ENQUIRY into the
Nature and Properties of the SCENT ;

OBSERVATIONS on the different Kinds of
HOUNDS, with the Manner of training
them.

A L S O

DIRECTIONS for the Choice of a HUNTER ;
The Qualifications requisite for a HUNTSMAN ;

And other general RULES to be observed in every
Contingency incident to the CHACÉ.

W I T H A N

INTRODUCTION, describing the Method of HARE-
HUNTING, practised by the Greeks.

Οὕτω δὲ ἐπιχαρὶ ἐστὶ το θηρίον, ὥστε ἑδεῖς ὅστις 'οὐκ ἂν ἰδῶν
ἰχνεύόμενον, εὐρισκόμενον, μεταθεόμενον, ἀλίσκόμενον ἐπιλάβοιτ'
ἂν ἢ τε ἰρῶη. Xenoph. Cyneg.

My Hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind.
So flew'd, so fanded, and their Heads are hung
With Ears that sweep away the Morning Dew ;
Crook-knee'd, and dew-lap'd, like Theſſalian Bulls ;
Slow in purſuit, but match'd in mouth like Bells,
Each under each. A cry more tuneable
Was never hallo'd to, nor cheer'd with Horn.

Shakeſpeare's Midſummer Night's Dream.

S O U T H A M P T O N :

Printed and ſold by T. BAKER ; ſold alſo by J. ROBSON,
New Bond-ſtreet, and J. FIELDING, Paternoſter-row,
London ; and D. PRINCE, Oxford.



T O

EDWARD LOVEDEN LOVEDEN, Esq;

T H E S E E S S A Y S,

O N A F A V O R I T E D I V E R S I O N,

W H I C H H A V E O F T E N A M U S E D H I M
I N M A N U S C R I P T,

A R E, A S A T O K E N O F E S T E E M A N D R E G A R D,

D E D I C A T E D

B Y H I S S I N C E R E F R I E N D,

A N D O B E D I E N T H U M B L E S E R V A N T,

T H E E D I T O R.

TO

EDWARD L. LUTHER, ESQ.

THESE ESSAYS

ON THE VARIOUS DIVISIONS

WHICH HAVE OFTEN AMUSED HIM

IN MANUSCRIPT

AND A TOKEN OF REGARD



DEDICATED

BY HIS DEVOTED FRIEND,

AND OBLIGED HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE EDITOR.

P R E F A C E

By the EDITOR;

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE

GRECIAN Method of Hare-hunting.

FROM X E N O P H O N.

THE following Essays were given me, many years ago, by a Gentleman, equally conversant with the study of Natural History and the Diversions of the Field, as a singular Curiosity, which had accidentally fallen into his hands. Having shewn them to most of my sporting Friends, I found them
a very

very desirous of having copies ; and imagining, as they give an account of a very popular and manly amusement, and investigate its nature and principles, many other Lovers of the Chace may be pleased with them, I am induced to lay them before the Public in this manner.

I know the literary and speculative part of Mankind are apt to consider these kind of country diversions in a contemptible light ; and, perhaps, they may be inclined to despise any person who shall devote his time to the writing, or even the reading, of a single page, on a subject which they may think only deserving the attention of Grooms, Country 'Squires, and Dog-boys. But this opinion is by no means founded on reason.

A healthy frame of body is to the full as necessary for our happiness as a sound disposition of mind. The Roman Satirist joins



joins them together in his prayer, and, indeed, the latter is never perfectly attainable without the former. Now to gain this in a compleat manner, more exercise is certainly requisite than the tasked hour of walking or riding, which the Man of Literature or Business with difficulty persuades himself to snatch from his favorite employments. This may, indeed, just suffice to keep off the dreadful consequences which must inevitably attend an entirely sedentary life; but will never give that state of robust, and if you will, of rude health, which no one who ever enjoyed will ever affect to despise.

Besides tho' the Middle-aged and the Phlegmatic may prevail on themselves to take these regular airings, the Young and the Sanguine must have some active enjoyment to call them forth; for they never will quit the most trifling, or even vicious pursuit, that engages their attention

tion within doors, unless they have some other equally interesting to call them to the field.

But rural diversions, when followed in a liberal manner, (for I do not wish to renew the almost extinguished breed of mere hunting 'Squires,) are particularly useful in this island, where, from the nature of our government, no man can be of consequence without spending a large portion of his time in the country, and every additional inducement to this mode of life is an additional security to our freedom and independence *. I much question whether our morals, or even our manners, are greatly improved

* With all due deference to modern Patriotism, I humbly conceive it impossible for him, who is not individually free and independent, to be politically so, and individual freedom and independence never yet fell to the lot of extravagance, luxury, and dissipation.

by that style of living, which empties our country seats to fill the metropolis, or the large provincial towns; and whether the manly character that once distinguished the Englishman has not suffered more on the side of firmness and integrity, than it has gained on that of politeness and elegance, by sacrificing the rough sports of the Field to the softer amusements of the Assembly and Card Table.

I know the Laws which are in force to preserve those Animals which are the objects of this diversion, are severely attacked by the sentimental Novel Writers of the present time. Writers who, without invention, humour, or real knowledge of mankind, dress up some improbable tale with affected maxims of fine feeling, and exquisite sensibility, and
endea-

endeavour to weaken the hearts, enflame the passions, and mislead the understandings of the rising generation. These abound with horrid stories of the young and ingenuous Peasant torn from his weeping Parents, and his distracted Bride, and either hurried into a loathsome dungeon, or banished to an unhealthy climate, only for the murder of a Hare or a Partridge. But I will venture to say, there is hardly a Day-laborer in the kingdom that may not, in a reasonable manner, be indulged with the use of these animals by a proper application; and if he is fond of the diversion they afford, and chuses to be idly busy rather than industriously so, he may perfectly satisfy himself by attending the Hounds or Greyhounds of the 'Squire, or assisting the Game-keeper with his gun. But that Laws should be made to prevent the man, whose family depends entirely on his

his labor for support, from quitting his flail, his plough, or his spade, to range the woods for the destruction of animals, which afford a noble and manly diversion to their Proprietor, I can conceive no more inconsistent with justice, than that he should be prevented from entering the orchard or the hen-roost. As the beasts of the forest and the fruits of the soil are equally common in a state of nature, so I see no reason why they may not be equally appropriated in a state of civil society. And I appeal to any person really conversant in these kind of facts, if he knows a single instance of one of those men, commonly called Poachers, whose profession is a violation of the Game Laws, and against whom alone they are ever executed with any severity, whose character and sufferings could entitle him to a tear, even from that most
senti-

sentimental of all sentimental Heroes *,
The Man of Feeling himself.

While I am thus defending the general principle of our Game Laws, I do not mean to stand forth as their Champion in every respect; they want great alteration as to the objects both of their penalties † and exemptions, and I am happy to learn from every respectable information that they are soon likely to receive it from the wisdom and authority of Parliament.

* This Gentleman, drawn as a pattern of peculiar milkiness of disposition, is betrayed once into the following bitter imprecations :

“ Curses on his narrow heart, that could violate a
 “ right so sacred. Heaven blast the wretch !

“ And from his derogate body never spring

“ A babe to honor him !——”

And what are the sacred rights whose cruel violation has drawn such heavy curses from so mild a bosom ? Why the 'Squire of the parish “ pulled down an old cottage, “ that had been a school, to open his prospect ;” and “ plowed up a green where the boys used to play, because “ they hurt the fence on the other side of it.”

† That a man of one hundred pounds a year may destroy the Game with impunity on any one's land, and that a person of ninety-nine shall be liable to pay five pounds for killing a Hare on his own, is a solecism too evident to need a comment.

But

But there are other persons whose suffrages I am very desirous of obtaining, that may be inclined to look with disdain on a Work that treats chiefly of Hare-hunting, and seems to give it the preference to all the diversions of the same kind. I mean the noble fraternity of Fox-hunters. As a Sportsman, I would carefully deprecate the resentment of so respectable a body, nor presume to defend the Author of the following Letters, in questioning the allowed superiority of Fox-hunting over the humbler sports of the Hare-chase. But, as the Author of the first of these Treatises justly observes, in many instances the various kinds of hunting are closely connected, and whatever be the game pursued, every Huntsman is equally interested in the breeding and education of the Hound, the nature of the scent, and the general rules of the chase. And, perhaps, both the Active and the Literary may pay some

difference to opinions backed by the authority of so respectable a name as that of Xenophon, who did not disdain to write a Treatise on Hunting. Though he considers that exercise as a proper school for forming the warrior, he evidently gives the preference to Hare-hunting. Speaking of the Hare, he avows his attachment to the pleasure of hunting her in these strong expressions, which are yet stronger in the original *. *This animal is so pleasing, that who-ever sees it, either trailed, or found, or pursued, or taken, forgets every thing else that he is most attached to.*

I have been, indeed, astonished in reading the *Cynegeticos* of Xenophon, to

* See the Greek motto in the title page. Mr. Somerville bears the same testimony in favor of Hare-hunting, when he particularly applies the following lines to the enthusiasm of that sport:

“ Where are their sorrows, disappointments, wrongs,
 “ Vexations, sickness, cares? All, all are gone,
 “ And with the panting winds lag far behind.”

find

Oppian, they not only * trailed to the Hare by the scent, but absolutely depended on that alone to pursue her flight in case she escaped the nets; for the death of the Game being the chief object of the chace in the woody and mountainous regions of Greece, it must be acknowledged that Xenophon advises means to accomplish that end, which would subject him to the appellation of Poacher from the modern fair Sportsman. The evidence of † Arrian confirms this,

* Xenophon particularly distinguishes the trail of the Hare, from the scent she leaves when running, the first he calls *ιυνια*, the last *δρομα*.

† Arrian was a military Officer under the Emperor Hadrian, being a follower of Epictetus, as Xenophon was of Socrates, he was fond of comparing himself to the illustrious Athenian, writing on the same subjects, and calling himself, with no small degree of presumption, *the Second Xenophon*. He wrote a Treatise on Hunting, intended as a supplement to that of Xenophon, and which is in fact an account of the method of coursing used in his time, in which he says, "Xenophon, the son of Gryllus, has given an account of Hunting, particularly of Hare-hunting, and the use of that exercise to the art of war, but as he has taken no notice of Greyhounds, which were not then known in Greece, I shall supply that deficiency."

and

and proves that, in the time of Xenophon, Greyhounds were not known in Greece.

Xenophon, after giving an account of the nature of the scent, particularly the trail, a description of the Hare, and her manner of setting, with directions how to pitch the toils proceeds thus :

“ The * Huntsman should go out in a
“ light careless dress, and shod in the
“ same manner, with a pole in his hand,
“ the man who carries the nets following
“ him, and should proceed with silence,
“ lest the Hare being near should hear
“ him and steal away from her feat.

“ The Dogs being brought to the
“ wood, each tied separately that they
“ may easily be let slip, the nets pitched,
“ and a man placed at them to watch, the

* *Kumyrtis*, both the meaning of the expression, and the description of the employment, exactly correspond with the modern word Huntsman.

“ Hunts-

find the accurate knowledge that great man had of the nature of the Hare, and the method of hunting her, and to observe one of the finest Writers, the bravest Soldiers, the ablest Politicians, the wisest Philosophers, and the most virtuous Citizens of antiquity, so intimately acquainted with all the niceties and difficulties of pursuing this little animal, and describing them with a precision, that would not disgrace the oldest Sportsman of Great Britain, who never had any other idea interfere to perplex his researches.

As I think no translation of Xenophon's Treatise on Hunting has appeared in our language, the Reader may not be displeased to see that part of it which bears an immediate relation to the subject of these Essays. I shall, therefore, lay before him a Description of the Greek

manner of Hare-hunting * extracted from that Writer, which I am the more induced to, as it will confute the assertion of Mr. Somerville, in his Preface to the CHACE, that *the Antients had no notion of pursuing wild beasts by the scent only*. I readily agree with him, that *they had no idea of a regular and well disciplined pack of Hounds*; but though, as † he and his learned Friend remark; Oppian describes a particular sort of Dog, which he calls *ἕκνυρς*, as finding the Game only, and following the scent no farther than the Hare's feat; and says, that after he has started her, she is pursued by the sight; yet this extract from Xenophon will shew, that much earlier than the time of

* Some quotations from Xenophon's *Cynegeticos*, the Reader will find in the notes on the subsequent Essays.

† See the Preface to Somerville's Chace.

Oppian,

“ Huntsman himself taking the Dogs
“ with him goes in search of the Game.

“ Then vowing a part of his spoils to
“ Apollo and Diana, the Huntress, he
“ should loose that of his Dogs which
“ has the finest nose, if in the winter
“ about sun rising, in the summer before
“ day-break, and in the other seasons
“ between those hours.

“ To take the trail of the Hare the
“ Dogs should be drawn from the cul-
“ tivated fields * upwards; but those that
“ do not frequent cultivated places must
“ be tried for in meadows, and marshes,
“ by streams, on rocks, or in woods, and
“ when she is moved there should be no
“ shouting, lest the Dogs, being too eager,
“ should with difficulty be brought to find
“ the scent.

* *i. e.* towards the mountains; as we now try to hit the Hare from the corn or turnip field, where she fed into stubbles, heaths, or covers.

“ If

“ If the Dog pricks the trail out, and
“ hits it off straight forwards, he should
“ slip another, and as these persist in the
“ trail, he should loose the rest one after
“ the other, but without great intervals,
“ and should follow himself, but not too
“ closely, encouraging the Dogs by their
“ names, but not vehemently, least they
“ should be too eager before the proper
“ time.

“ They keep running on with joy and
“ spirit, investigating the trail through
“ every turn, now in circles, now straight
“ forward, now obliquely, through thick
“ and thin, places known, and unknown,
“ passing each other by turns, moving
“ their tails, erecting their ears, and their
“ eyes darting fire. When they are near
“ the Hare they discover it to the Huntf-
“ man, by shaking violently, not only
“ their tails, but their whole bodies by
“ rushing on in a warlike manner, by
“ trying

" trying to surpass each other in speed,
 " by running eagerly together, by now
 " crouding close, and then dispersing,
 " and again rushing on, till at last they
 " come to the seat of the Hare, and run
 " in upon her.

" She immediately leaps up and flies,
 " the Dogs pursuing her in full cry,
 " those who follow * chearing the Dogs,
 " and the Huntsman wrapping his coat
 " round his arm, and taking his pole,
 " should also follow, taking care to keep
 " behind the Hare, and not to head her,
 " which is † unsportsman like. The
 " Hare runing off and being soon out
 " of sight, generally comes back to the
 " place where she was first started; The
 " Huntsman should call to the person
 " at the nets to be attentive, and he

* Here, and in several other places, Xenophon uses the
 hunting language of Greece, which very much resembles
 what we use on the same occasion.

† Αἰγίων γὰρ.

“ indicates whether the Hare is taken or
“ not. If she is taken in the first ring,
“ the Dogs are called off and they try for
“ another, but if not, they follow them
“ as swiftly as possible, and do not give
“ her up, but persevere diligently.

“ And if they meet with them again
“ during the chace, the Huntsman should
“ encourage them with his voice, but if
“ they are got very forward, so that he
“ is not able to keep up with them, but
“ is thrown out, and can neither per-
“ ceive them near him, nor hear them
“ open, nor see them running by the
“ scent; he should, still keeping on, en-
“ quire of whoever he happens to meet
“ if they have seen the Dogs. And when
“ he finds them out, if they are on the
“ scent, he should come up to them and
“ encourage them, calling each Dog by
“ his name as often as possible, and
“ changing the tone of his voice to
“ harsh,

“harsh, or soft, loud, or low, according
 “to the circumstances, * especially if
 “the Hare has made her course among
 “the mountains. When he finds they
 “have over run the scent, he should
 “hollow the Dogs back, and when he
 “has brought them to it again he should
 “draw them round, making many
 “circles, and if the scent is very weak,
 “he should particularly observe the nets†,
 “and bring the Dogs to them, chearing

* The literal translation is, “If the chace should happen
 “to be in the mountains, he should add, besides his usual
 “encouragements, *That's good Dogs !---That's good Dogs !*
 ἐν κυνέσσι ἐν ὧ κυνέσσι, just as we encourage the Hound that
 tries to hit the Hare through a hard highway, or any place
 unfit to preserve the scent; which was most likely the case
 on the rocky mountains of Greece.

† Στοιχόν, the word in the original signifies, in the
 hunting language of Greece, a continuation of nets, by
 which the woods were surrounded; the use of trying
 round them when the Hounds were at fault, was to find
 through what meuse the Hare had escaped, or whether she
 had made a short turn back; just as we now try in the
 same circumstances round an inclosed field.

“and

“ and encouraging them, till they hit it
“ off again.

“ When the scent is very strong they
“ rush upon it, leaping, crouding to-
“ gether, and stooping down, signifying
“ it in this manner, by well known signs
“ they pursue very swiftly, but while
“ they thus persist in the scent close to
“ each other the Huntsman must re-
“ strain himself and not follow the Dogs
“ too near, lest through emulation they
“ should over run the scent. When they
“ come near the Hare, and discover it
“ plainly to the Huntsman, he should be
“ very careful that, through fear of the
“ Dogs, she does not steal off before
“ he comes up; while they, shaking their
“ tails, jostling one against the other,
“ springing up often, doubling their
“ tongues, and lifting up their heads
“ towards the Huntsman, discover that
“ they themselves are certain of the
“ scent,

“ scent, and at last start the Hare, and
“ pursue her in full cry. Then the
“ person who stands at the nets gives
“ a particular hollow, to signify whe-
“ ther she falls into them, or escapes
“ by going beyond them, or turning
“ short. If she is taken they try for
“ another, if not they continue to pur-
“ sue her, following the instructions
“ already given.

“ But when the Dogs are tired with
“ running, and it begins to be late in
“ the day, it will be necessary for the
“ Huntsman himself to look for the
“ Hare, when she is nearly run down;
“ and he must leave nothing unexplored
“ that the earth produces, lest he should
“ miss of her, for the animal will lie
“ very close and not get up, both from
“ fear and fatigue. And he should
“ bring the Dogs forward, encouraging
“ the

" the timid ones much, the eager ones
 " little, and those between these ex-
 " tremes moderately, till they either
 " kill her by overtaking her, or drive
 " her into the nets.

" After this he ought to take down
 " the nets, and calling off the Dogs give
 " over the sport; staying somewhere du-
 " ring the heat of the day in summer, lest
 " the feet of the Dogs should be scorched
 " by the way."

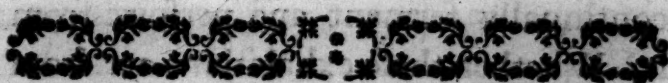
From this extract it plainly appears
 that the Greeks pursued the Hare by the
 foot after she was started, and sometimes
 fairly hunted her down in that manner
 when she escaped the nets. Many of the
 instructions given by Xenophon may be
 applied to the modern chase, and there
 will be found a great resemblance be-
 tween some of his rules and those of the
 following Essays, especially the Letters.

My

My readers will most probably think this introduction of a sufficient length for the work it precedes. I shall therefore conclude it by assuring them that I have published both the tracts exactly as they came into my hands, without making a single alteration, or adding any observations of my own, except in the notes,



ZYA 833



AN
E S S A Y
ON
H U N T I N G.

♦♦♦♦ ABOVE all things the scent
 ♦ A ♦ has ever been my admiration.
 ♦♦♦♦ The bulk, size, figure, and other
 accidents or qualities of these parts or
 portions of matter that discharge them-
 selves from the bodies of these Beasts
 of Game, are subjects much fitter for the
 experiments and learned descants of a
 Philosopher, than a simple Huntsman.
 Whether they are to be considered as an
 extraneous stock or treasure of odorife-
 rous particles given them by Divine
 wisdom, for the very purpose of hunt-
 ing? Whether they are proper iden-
 B tical

tical parts of the animal's body, that continually ferment and perspire from it? Whether these exhalations are from the breath of her lungs, or through the skin of her whole body? are questions also that deserve the subtlety of a Virtuoso, But such observations as long experience has suggested to me, I shall, in the plainest manner I am able, lay before my Readers.

That these particles are inconceivably small, is, I think, manifest from their vast numbers, I have taken hundreds of Hares, after a chase of two, three, four, or five hours, and could never perceive the least difference in bulk or weight, from those I have seized or snapt in their forms: Nor could I ever learn from Gentlemen, who have hunted basket Hares, that they could discover any visible waste in their bodies, any farther than may be supposed to be the effect of discharging their grosser excrements.

But



But supposing an abatement of two or three grains, or drams, after so long a fatigue; yet how minute and almost infinite must be the division of so small a quantity of matter, when it affords a share to so many couple of Dogs, for eight, ten, or twelve miles successively. Deducting, at the same time, the much greater numbers of these particles that are lost in the ground, dissipated in the air, extinguished and obscured by the foetid perspirations of the Dogs, and other animals, or by the very fumes and exhalations of the earth itself. That these particles are subject to such dissipation or corruption, every Sportsman knows; for as none of them will retain their odour after a certain proportionable time, so it is daily evident that this time of their duration is very obnoxious to the vicissitudes of the weather; that the scent of the animal (as well as her more solid flesh) will lose its sweetness, sooner or later, according to the disposition of the am-

bient air. I have frequently heard the good Houfewives complain, that against rain or thunder, their milk will turn, and their larders taint; and I have as often perceived that, a storm approaching, the scent will, in a moment, change and vanish. Nor is the suddenness of such alteration the least wonder, if we take into consideration the smallness of the particles. The same efficient cause may penetrate and corrupt these minute corpuscles in the twinkling of an eye, which requires an hour or a day to operate on bodies of greater bulk and substance; as the same fire, or aquafortis, will dissolve the filings of steel in an instant, though a pound lump of that same metal is so long able to resist their violence. That these particles of scent are of an equal (exactly equal) specific gravity with the particles of the air, is demonstrated by the falling and rising of them in just proportion to it. I have often smiled at hasty Huntsmen, to hear them rating and cursing their
 dogs

dogs (that yesterday were the best in England) for galloping and staring, with their noses in the air, as if their game was flown; for often does it happen that it is in vain for them to seek after the scent in any other place, the increasing weight of that fluid element having waisted it over their heads. Though even at such a season, after the first mettle and fury of the cry is something abated, the more steady Beagles may make a shift to pick it out by the particles left by the brush of her feet, especially if there be not a strong, drying, exhaling wind to hurry these away after the rest. This often happens in a calm, gentle, steady frost, when, as I conceive, the purity, coldness, or perhaps the nitre of the air, serves to fix and preserve the few remaining particles, that they do not easily corrupt. At another season, when the air is light, or growing lighter, the scent must proportionably be falling or sinking, and then every
Dog,

Dog, though in the height of his courage, he pushes forwards, yet is forced to come back again and again, and cannot make any sure advances, but with his nose in the ground. When circumstances are thus, (if there be not a storm of thunder impending to corrupt the scent, as I said before) you may expect the most curious and lasting sport; Puss having then a fair opportunity to shew her wiles, and every old or slow Dog to come in for his share, to display his experience, the subtilty of his judgment, and the tenderness of his nostrils. The most terrible day for the Hare is, when the air is in its mean gravity, or equilibrio, tolerable moist, but inclining to grow drier, and fanned with the gentle breezes of the zephyrs: The moderate gravity buoys up the scent as high as the Dog's breast; the vesicles of moisture serve as so many canals, or vehicles, to carry the effluvia into their noses; and the gentle fannings help, in such wise,

to

to spread and dissipate them, that every Hound, even at eight or ten paces distant, especially on the windy side, may have his portion.

I advise all Gentlemen who delight in hunting, to provide themselves with a barometer, or weather glass; I am sorry to say, that this instrument, though a fine invention, is still imperfectly understood by the Philosopher, as well as the Farmer, and the index generally annexed to it, of rain, fair, settled fair, &c. are impertinent and delusive. If the gravity of the air is the cause of drought, the latter should be in proportionate degrees with the former; and yet we see the sudden, or extraordinary rising of the mercury, a sure prognostick of an approaching change: We see it often continue to fall after the rain is over, and we may generally observe the most settled fair, and the greatest rains, both happen when it is in a moderate height. By the accounts I have kept, the mercury is commonly
at

at the highest marks in dull cloudy weather, yet does it often fall a great deal faster before a few drops or a dry mist, than an impetuous rain; and even continue to do so after a hard rain is over: And what is more common than to see it descend many days together, to the terror of the Husbandman, in hay or corn harvest; when the consequence, at last, is only a few drops, weighty enough to descend, though the air was in its utmost degree of gravity, and the mercury at thirty-one inches. The vulgar solutions of these difficulties are insufficient and puzzling, and very inconsistent with avowed principles: And, in my humble opinion, there will never appear a certain and satisfactory account of these perplexing phænomena, till some sage Naturalist shall give himself the trouble of a more full and complete Diary, than as yet has been published; where, together with the degrees of the barometer, thermometer, and hygrometer, shall be taken
in,

in, in distinct columns, the time of the year, the length of the days, the age of the moon, the situation of the wind, with its degrees of roughness, the colours of the clouds at sun rising and setting, the manner of flying, chattering, or flocking of birds, and divers other concurring tokens and symptoms, which may be of great use, in conjunction with the said instruments, to settle and confirm our prognostication. In the mean time it must be confessed, that this ingenious machine is of great use to the observant Huntsman; and when he rises in the morning, and finds the air moist and temperate, the quicksilver in his glass moderately high, or gently convex, he has a fair invitation to prepare for his exercise. I know it is a custom with our juvenile Sportsmen to fix the time two or three days before hand to meet a friend, or to hunt in such or such a quarter. But appointed matches of this kind are my aversion and abhorrence: He that will

C

enjoy

enjoy the pleasures of the chace, must ask leave of the Heavens. Hunting is a trade that is not to be forced, nor can the best Cry that ever was coupled, make any thing of it unless the air be in tune.

The earth also hath no small influence on this delicious pastime; for though it sometimes happens (according to the observation above) that the scent is floating, so that you may run down a Hare through water and mire, especially if you keep pretty close after her, without the trouble of stooping; yet, at such a season, the first fault is the loss of your Game; the perspirations of her body being waisted over head by the gravity of the air, and those of her feet being left on elements that absorb or confound them. This last case very often happens at the going off of a frost, the mercury is then commonly falling, and by consequence the scent sinking to the ground: The earth is naturally on such occasion fermenting,
dissolv-

dissolving, stinking, exhaling, and very porous, so that it is impossible but most of the particles must then be corrupted, buried, or overcome by stronger vapours. It is common to hear the vulgar say, she carries dirt in her heels, but that is not all, it being very plain, by what has been observed, that it is not only by the scent of the foot she is so eagerly pursued.---The mention of frost puts me in mind of a particular observation of my own making, that may be useful or diverting to my Brethren of the Chace: You all make it a great part of your pleasure to hunt out the walk of a Hare to her seat, and doubtless you have often been surprizingly disappointed on such occasions. You have many times been able to hunt the same walk in one part of the fields and not in another; you have hunted the same walk at ten or eleven, which gave the least scent at seven in the morning; and, which is most provoking and perplexing of all, you have
often

often been able to hunt it only at the wrong end, or backwards; after many hours wonder and expectation, cherishing your Dogs, and cursing your fortune, you are in truth never so far from your Game as when your hunt is warmest. All these accidents are only the effect of the hoar-frost, or very gross dew, (for they never happen otherwise,) and from thence must the miracle be accounted for.*

I have already proved that a thaw tends to corrupt the particles, and have as good reason to maintain that the frost fixes, covers, and preserves them. Whether this is done by inter-

* "In the winter there is no scent early in the morning when there is either an hoar-frost or a hard frost; the hoar-frost, by its force, contracts and contains all the warm particles in itself, and the harder frost congeals them. In these cases the Dogs, with the most tender noses, cannot touch before the sun dispels them, and the day is advanced, then the Dogs can smell, and the trail yields a scent as it evaporates." XENOPHON.

septing their ascent, and precipitating them to the ground by the gross particles of frozen dew, or whether by sheathing them and protecting them from the penetrating air, (as the good Wives preserve their potted meats and pickles,) I leave to the Learned, but the facts are certain, and confirmed by experience. We have, therefore, only to take notice, by the way, that the hoar-frost is very often of short continuance, changeable and uncertain, both as to its time and place of falling, and hence all these difficulties are easily resolved. Let the Huntsman, as soon as he is out of bed, examine but the glass windows, which commonly discover whether any hoar-frost has fallen, what time it came, and in what condition of continuance, or going off, it is for the present. If it appears to have fallen at two, three, or four in the morning, (suppose in the month of October, and other times of the year must be judged of by proportion,) and
to

to be going off about break of day, it may then be expected that there will be a great difficulty, or impossibility, of trailing to her seat, because her morning retreat being on the top of the frozen dew, the scent is either dissolved, or corrupted, or dissipated, and exhaled. It is true, after such a night, the Dogs will find work in every field, and often hunt in full cry, but it will be generally backward, and always in vain; her midnight ramblings, which were covered by the frost, being now open, fresh, and fragrant. If the said frost begins later in the morning, after Puss is seated, there is nothing to be done till that is gone off, and this is the reason that we often see the whole Pack picking out a walk at nine or ten in the same path where Sweet-lips herself could not touch at seven. Again, if the frost began early enough, and continues steadily till you are gotten into the fields, you may then make it good to her seat, as well as at other times

times on naked ground, though you must expect to run a good risque at the going off of the frost, according to the observations already laid down.

It is also to be remembered, that there is no small accidental difference in the very particles of scent; I mean that they are stronger, sweeter, or more distinguishable at one time than at another, and that this difference is found not only in divers, but often in the same individual creature, according to the changes of the air, or the soil, as well as of her own motions or conditions. That there is a different scent in other animals of the same species, is evident from the draught Hounds, which were formerly made use for tracing and pursuing Thieves and Deer-stealers, or rather from any common Cur or Spaniel, which will hunt out their master, or their master's horse distinctly from all others: And that it is the same with the Hare is no less visible from the old Beagles, which will
not

not readily change for a fresh one, unless she starts in view, or unless a fault happens that puts them in confusion, and inclines them in despair to take up with the next they can come by.

That the same Hare will, at divers times, emit finer or grosser particles, is equally manifest to every one who shall observe the frequent changes in one single chace, the alterations that ensue on any different motion, and on her degrees of sinking. The coursing of a Cur Dog, or the fright from an obvious passenger, is often the occasion of an unexpected fault; and, after such an accident, the Dogs must be cherished, and be put upon it again and again, before they will take it and acknowledge it for their game. The reason is, as I conceive, the change of the motion causes a change in the perspiring particles; and as the spirits of the Dogs are all engaged and attached to particles of such or such a figure, it is with difficulty they

they come to be sensible of, or attentive to, those of a different relish. You will pardon the expression if I compare old Jouler, in this case, to a Mathematician, who is so intent on the long perplexing ambages of the problem before him, that he hears not the clock or bell that summons him to a new employment. The alterations in a yielding Hare are less frequently the occasion of faults, because they are more gradual, and like the same rope, insensibly tapering and growing smaller. But that alterations there are every Dog-boy knows by the old Hounds, which still pursue, with greater earnestness, as she is nearer her end.

I take motion to be the chief cause of shedding or discharging these scenting particles, because she is very seldom perceived whilst quiet in her form, though the Dogs are never so near, though they leap over her, or, as I have often seen, even tread upon her. Indeed, it sometimes happens that she is, as we say, winded where she sits. But this may be

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the effect of that train of scent she left behind her in going to her chair, or more probably the consequence of her own curiosity, in moving, and rising up, (as I have also seen) to peep after and watch the proceedings of her adversaries. However, we must grant that these particles of scent, though the effect of motion, are not more gross and copious in proportion to the increasing swiftness of the animal, any more than in a watering-pot, which the swifter it passes, the less of the falling water it bestows on the subjacent plants.

It is very plain, the slower the Hare moves the stronger and grosser, *ceteris paribus*, are these particles she leaves behind her, which I take to be one reason (besides the cloathing and shielding of them from the penetrating air by the descending frost or dew) that the morning walk will give scent * so much longer than

* "The scent of the trail of the Hare going to her seat lasts longer than that of her course when pursued: When she goes to her seat she goes slowly, often standing still; but her course, when pursued, is performed running; therefore the ground is saturated with one, and not filled with the other." XENOPHON.

the flight in hunting. However, it is as remarkable, that these odorous particles gradually decay and end with her life *, because it requires the most curious noses to lead the cry when she is near her last; because she is so often entirely lost at the last squat, and because if you knock her on the head before them, there is hardly one in the Pack that will stop or take any notice of her.

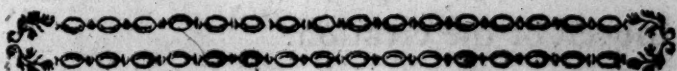
The greatest art and curiosity is discovered in hunting the foil, especially if she immediately steal back behind the Dogs the same path she came; for it must require the utmost skill to distinguish well the new scent from the old, when both are mixed, obscured, and confounded, with the strong perspirations of so many Dogs and Horses. Yet this we have often seen performed by ready and expert Hunters, However, if the Dogs be not masters of their business, or if the air be not in due

* This observation, which my own experience convinces me is just, the Reader will find directly contradicted in the subsequent letters. See letter 6.

balance, the difficulty will be the greater.

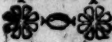
The Reader will observe, that the remarks I have made are generally on the Hare, which, I have said, is of all others most worthy of our speculation and enquiry. By analogy the hunting the Deer or Fox will be easily understood, for though the scent of these is generally higher, more obvious to noses of the Dogs, and in greater plenty whilst the particles last, yet for that very reason (floating in the air) they are sooner diffused, and require a more vigorous, though less subtle, Huntsman, as well as swifter Beagles.

HOUNDS.



H O U N D S.


Y learned Predecessors have been

O M O so full and copious in descriptions

of these Animals, in directions for
mending and improving the Breed, in
giving advice for chusing, pairing, ken-
neling, feeding, physicking, entering,
governing, encouraging, and correcting
the loud-tongued Society, that there is
little left for a new Author, without re-
petition or impertinence. Let me only
admire and adore the goodness of our
bountiful Father, in furnishing his chil-
dren with creatures so innocently, as well
as healthfully, to divert them, in supply-
ing us with forces for subduing and de-
stroying those beasts of rapine, which
would

would otherwise multiply, to the great disturbance, danger, and destruction of the rest of the creation.

It is a common practice of our young Students in Philosophy, (for use or for diversion,) either for the love of knowledge, or of mischief, to steal or lay hold of their neighbours Dogs, in order to dissect them. We may hear them often displaying their skill, with pert eloquence; boasting of their discoveries in the circulation of the blood, the contexture of the muscles, the progress of the nerves, veins, and arteries, and learnedly descanting on the glands or strainers, the imperceptible ducts of the lacteals, as well as the spiral motion of the bowels. To such I recommend a little farther and more particular enquiry into the special formation of these creatures. Let them employ their knives, their glasses, and their pens, to describe to us ignorant Country Squires the organs of sound, as well as scent, in this domestic animal we so much delight in. I leave to these curious Virtuosi to delineate

delineate the lamina of the Beagles noses, with those innumerable olfactory tubes and pores of all sizes and figures, that are spread over or pass through them. Let them nicely investigate those minute fibres which compose their lungs, trachea, lips, and palate; those vessels which qualify them to emit a voice so sweet and chearful, so proper to give notice of their discoveries to their master, as well as to call together their straggling companions, to unite their forces.

But there is a question or two which have been sometimes put me by my inquisitive Brethren, to which I think it incumbent upon me in this place to give an answer.

First, I have been asked, what or how many different sorts of these Animals of Chace were originally created? What were those first kinds, out of which so many packs of innumerable shapes, tongues, sizes, and colours, may be supposed to be produced?

My

My answer is short and plain; yet something fuller than the questions require: That, in my opinion, not only all Hounds or Beagles, but all Dogs whatsoever, even from the terrible Boar Dog to the little Flora, are all one in the first creation, that every virtue and faculty, size or shape, which we find or improve in every Dog upon earth, were originally comprehended in the first parents of the species; and that all this variety we behold in them, is either the natural product of the climate, or the accidental effect of soil, food, or situation, or very frequently the issue of human care, curiosity, or caprice. Every Huntsman knows that a vast alteration may be made in his breed, as to tongue, heels, or colour, by industriously improving the same blood for twenty or thirty years; and what nature can do, (which wisely tends to render every kind of creature fit for the country where it is to inhabit, or be employed,) is manifest by this: That a couple of right Southern Hounds, re-
moved

moved to the North, and suffer to propagate, without art or mixture, in a hilly mountainous country, where the air is light and thin, will, by sensible degrees, decline and degenerate into lighter bodies, and shriller voices, if not rougher coats. The like alterations may be observed in the breeds of sheep, horses, and other cattle, and indeed in every other species subject to the art and interest of man, and employed to generate at his choice and humour. Even in those animals that are reckoned among the *feræ natura*, every traveller bears witness of a remarkable difference, and I hope the Reader will pardon the comparison if I affirm the same of man himself.

That we are all, of every nation and language, the sons of Adam, we have the testimony of God, which to honest Hunters (who are generally of the orthodox party) is of sufficient authority. As to Doubters and Sceptics I refer them to the ancient Poets, Historians, and Geographers, who will soon supply them with

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innumerable arguments and observations which unanswerably demonstrate the novelty of the world. The migration of colonies, the gradual peopling of the earth, and the propagating and spreading of the human species from one and the same original; and yet what an incredible and monstrous variety is risen among us, in humour and constitution, as well as shape and colour? Who could imagine the thick-lipped Ethiopian, wool-pated Negroe, the blink-eyed Chinese, the stately Spaniard, and the dapper Frenchman, to be of the same parentage? Or to go no farther than our own nation and climate, how improbable may it seem that the fashionable Nymph, who is not able to make a visit of thirty yards without a chair or coach, a Squire to lead her, or a cane to support her, should be cast in the same mould with the Farmer's Daughter? Or that the sturdy Champions of Queen Bess's days, should be but the great grandfathers of that puny race, which is to be seen swarming in all modern
public

public Assemblies, unless it be at Church?

But is there not a more substantial distinction between Curs and Greyhounds, Turnspits and Beagles? I can hardly grant it; or if there be it will be easily accounted for by the considerations above, by giving just allowance for food and climate, by remembering that these animals are frequent breeders, that they generate at the choice and discretion of their masters, that the fancy or curiosity of the sons of men have been five thousand years mixing and altering, improving or spoiling them. The Butcher sends for the famous Dog with the silver collar to couple with his favourite, and rears up the whelp with blood and garbage, to increase the valour and strength of this progeny. The Huntsman nourishes his close-begotten litter with sheeps trotters, to invigorate their heels, and Belinda gives her little Oronoko brandy, to make him good for nothing but to look on, to contract his

growth into a petit epitome of her *tres beau*, Philander.

But notwithstanding the effects of human industry and contrivance are thus great and numerous, yet they are not infinite, there is still a *ne plus* to which they are stinted, nor can all our devices add one new species to the works of the creation. Nature is still uniform as to the main, the Almighty Creator is not to be imitated by short-handed mortals: In spite of art our mules will all be barren; nor can the most cunning projector produce one amphigeneous animal that will increase and multiply. There appears a distinct specific difference in all living creatures; the Horse, the Dog, the Bear, the Goat, however diversified by art or accident in size or figure, will ever discover something that appropriates to them those names or characters; and, above all other things, the peculiar appetites and powers of generation will prompt them to own and indicate their relation. This, I conceive, is the most undeniable argu-

argument that all Dogs are of one original species, since every body knows that no deformity, disproportion, or dissimilitude, can hinder any one of that name from courting, following, or accepting the other, nor their mongrel offspring from enjoying the common nature and faculties of the species.

But admitting the distinctions of Hounds, Beagles, &c. as they commonly stand, I have been also consulted what particular sorts I would recommend for each particular Game in this island. For the Deer, the Fox, the Otter, &c. every Sportsman knows the breed that is most proper; but as each of them, with a little application, will joyfully follow the sweet scented Hare, the query is, what kind is preferable for that delightful exercise?

The most satisfactory reply to every Hunter is, that his own kind is best; but such as are setting up a new cry, I would advise to begin to breed on the middle size Dogs, betwixt the Southern Hound
and

and the Northern Beagle. It is true, the finest and most curious sport is generally with the former. Whether it be the particular formation of their long trunks, or the extraordinary moisture that always cleaves to the noses and lips of these sort of Dogs, I need not enquire in this place, but certain it is that they are endued with the most accurate sense of smelling, and can often take and distinguish the scent an hour after the lighter Beagles can make nothing of it. Their slowness also better disposes them to receive the commands and directions of the Huntsman, and their much phlegm, (for there seems to be a difference in the constitutions of other animals as well as man,) I say, their phlegm gives them patience to proceed with caution and regularity, to make sure of every step as they go, carefully to describe every indenture, to unravel each puzzling trick or figure. But these grave sort of Dogs are however fittest for masters of the same temper, as they are able to hunt in cold scent, they

they are too apt to make it so, by their want of speed and vigor to push forward, and keep it warm; their exactness often renders them trifling and tedious; and they are like some nice Dames, who stand picking out every dust and mote, whilst they might dress the meat. By this means, though the hunt be finer, yet the prey (which is by some thought necessary to complete the sport) very often escapes, the length of the chace takes up the time, and exposes them to numerous hazards of losing.

The North Country Beagle is nimble and vigorous, and does his business as furiously as Jehu himself can wish him: He pursues Puss with the most impetuous eagerness, gives her no time to breathe or double, and, if the scent lies high, will easily demolish a leash, or two brace before dinner*. But this is too much,
too

* All other kind of Hounds are now entirely laid aside by those who affect to hunt in style, though Somerville gives

too short, and violent, nor is such success often to be expected. For though this kind of Dogs are much in request among our younger Gentry, who take out-running and out-riding their neighbours to be the best part of the sport; yet it would make one sick to be out with them in a cross morning, when the walk lies backward, or the scent low or falling. The Huntsman rates, the Groom rides, the 'Squire swears, the whips crack; war-wing, war-counter, war-sheep, p—take ye, the d—l had ye, is the burden of their musick. Their high mettle makes them impatient to drive the nail as it will go, rather than stay to creep or stoop, they

gives his testimony against this practice in the following animated lines:

“ A different Hound for every different chase
 “ Select with judgment, nor the timorous Hare
 “ O'er match'd destroy, but leave that vile offence
 “ To the mean, murderous, coursing crew, intent
 “ On blood and spoil; O blast their hopes, just
 Heaven!”

SOMERVILLE'S CHACE.

push

push forward, at every fume they catch, they cross it, over-run it, hunt backward, or hunt any thing to force a trade; in short, in my opinion, it is impossible to make a good Pack of these, without the constant discipline of the whip, without perpetually hunting them, and hunting them down to tame their fury, and quench their fire.

There is yet another sort in great favour with small Gentry, because they eat but little: These, as their noses are very tender and not far from the ground, I have often seen to make tolerable sport, but without great care they are flirting and maggotty, and very apt to chaunt and chatter on any or no occasion: A rabbit, mouse, or weasel, will please them instead of lawful game; and, in truth, it is seldom they understand (if I may use that expression) their business, or perform their office with judgment or discretion.

The mixture of all, or any of these, I should judge to be better, especially if a distinguishable portion of southern blood

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be

be remaining in their veins. The managing the litters I must leave to the discretion of the 'Squire and his man. But I know by experience a race may be produced, that, by running with less speed, will surer and sooner arrive at the end; a race that carry with them a good share of the nose and steadiness of the deep curtails, the vigour and activity of the chackling Beagle, the strength and toughness of the right Buck Hound, and the tuneful voices that are a compound of all; but enough of this.



T H E



T H E
H O R S E.

HE Horfe I take to be very ne-
cessary furniture towards the
pleasure of Hunting; for though
I have heard of wonderful performances
among boasting Footmen, I could never
yet see any creature on two legs keep in
with the Dogs. But as every Groom, and
most Gentlemen, are well acquainted
with the use, properties, excellencies, and
management of this noble beast, I shall
offer very little on this beaten subject,
only let it be observed, that not every
good and fleet Horfe is always a good

F 2

Hunter:

Hunter: For he may have strength and vigour for a long journey, and yet not be able to bear the shocks and strainings of a chace; another may be swift enough to win a plate on a smooth turf, which yet will be crippled or heart-broken by one Hare in February. The right Hunter ought to have strength without weight, courage without fire, speed without labour, a free breath, a strong walk, a nimble, light, but a large gallop, and a sweet trot, to give change and ease to the more speedy muscles. The marks most likely to discover a Horse of these properties are, a vigorous, sanguine, and healthy colour, a head and neck as light as possible, whether handsome or not, a quick moving eye and ear, clean wide jaws and nostrils, large thin shoulders, and high withers, deep chest, and short back, large ribs, and wide pinbones, tail high and stiff, gaskins well spread, and buttocks lean and hard; above all, let his joints be strong and firm, and his legs

legs and pasterns short; for I believe there was never yet a long limber-legged Horse that was able to gallop down steep hills, and take bold leaps with a weight upon his back, without sinking or foundering.

As to all matters of feeding, physicking, airing, &c. I refer you to the more expert Grooms, or the learned Doctors of the Hammer and Pincers. But as my way in ordering my steeds is to consult use rather than ornament, I always keep them in the open air, unless the night after a hard chace; I allow them two or three acres of pasture to cool their bellies, and stretch their limbs, with a warm hovel to shelter them from a storm, a rack, and manger, with proper provisions to keep them in heart, and a fresh spring of water in the same field, to quench their thirst. I have known a gelding, with this regimen, to be sound, fresh, and in full vigor, after ten years the hardest hunting; and I dare promise him that shall try, to
find

find such a one as far beyond the fine-cloathed, thin-skinned Courser, *cæterus paribus*, as a rough Plowman is fitter for business than a soft-handed Beau.



HUNTS.



HUNTSMAN.

♦♦♦♦T is common enough with our
 ♦♦♦♦ I ♦♦♦♦ young 'Squires to take the first
 ♦♦♦♦♦ wide-throated Attendant that
 offers his service, and make him his
 Huntsman, imagining the green coat
 will qualify him for the office, as some
 set themselves for Doctors, with no other
 recommendation but large eye-brows, and
 a set of loud-sounding polysyllables.

But as every wood will not make a
 Mercury, much less is he fit for a Hunt-
 sman who is not born with a natural cast
 and readiness of mind, and has not im-
 proved

proved those talents by long study, observation, and experience.

I once had the pleasure of a long conversation with a very ingenious learned Gentleman, then seventy years old: Having himself hunted with all sorts of Dogs, and in most of the counties in England, he entertained me with a most delightful discourse on that subject, and upon my making him a compliment on his perfect knowledge in the art, " Oh, Sir, (says he,) the life of man is too short." This sage declaration was received as a jest by some of the company, but I have since found it a serious truth. I am an old man myself, the wiles of the Hare have been all along the study of my leisure hours, and yet I am puzzled and out-witted by the subtil creature. When I think myself sure, she often puts some unexpected trick upon me, and hardly do I ever lose her in tolerable scenting weather; but, like a General after the loss of a battle, I can afterwards discern that it was the effect of some oversight,

want of provision for such or such a contingency. For the conquest of a Hare, like that of an enemy, does not depend on vigorous attacks or pursuits, but there are a hundred accidents to which the success of the field is obnoxious, and which ought always to be in the head of the Huntsman, if he would come off with glory.

It is not enough, with good judgment, to chuse our forces, to raise their courage with wholesome food, and frequent exhortations, and to make them subject to the word of command by constant discipline and exercise, but in time of action we ought to be armed with calmness and presence of mind, to observe the various motions and stratagems made use of to defeat us, and furnished with prudent foresight and provision for every new emergency to which the fortune of the day is subject. We must never forget that every Hare (as we say of Fencers) has her particular play; that, however, that play is occasioned or changed accord-

G

ing

ing to the variation of wind and weather, the weight of the air, the nature of the ground, and the degrees of eagerness with which she is pursued. Nor are we to be unmindful of the numerous accidents she may meet with in her way, to turn her out of her course, to cover her flight, to quicken her speed, or to furnish her with an opportunity of new devices. I say, it is not enough to have a general knowledge of these things before the Game is started, but in the heat of action, when we are most tempted to be in raptures with the sound of the horns*, the melody of the cry, and the expectation of success, we must carry them in our heads; every step we make we must calmly observe the alterations of soil, the position of the wind, the time

* I am at a loss to conceive why this noble appendage to Hunting is entirely disused in this age of expence. Perhaps the French horn may be inconvenient in a Fox chase, but surely would be a pleasing addition to a good pack of Harriers.

of the year, and no less take notice with what speed she is driven, how far she is before, to what place she tends; whether she is likely to keep on forward, or to turn short behind; whether she has not been met by passengers, frightened by curs, intercepted by sheep; whether an approaching storm, a rising wind, a sudden blast of the sun, the going off of the frost, the repetition of foiled ground, the decay of her own strength, or any other probable turn of affairs, has not abated or altered the scent.

There are other things still no less necessary to be remembered than the former; as the particular quality and character of each Dog; whether the present Leaders are not apt to over-run it; which are most inclined to stand upon the double; which are to be depended on in the highway, on the ploughed ground, or a bare turf, in an uncertain scent, in the crossing of fresh game, through a flock of sheep, upon the foil or stole-back. The size also and strength of the

Hare will make a difference ; nor must the Hounds themselves be followed so closely, or so loudly cherished when fresh and vigorous, as after they have run off their speed and mettle, and begin to be tired.

I would advise a young Huntsman, when the scent lies well, always to keep himself pretty far behind. At such a time, especially if it be against the wind, it is impossible for the poor Hare to hold it forward ; nor has she any trick or refuge for her life, but to stop short by the way, or path, and, when all are past, to steal immediately back, which is often the occasion of an irrecoverable fault, in the midst of the warmest sport and expectations, and is the best trick the poor Hare has for her life in scenting weather ; whereas if the Huntsman were not too forward, he would have the advantage of seeing her steal off, and turning her aside, or more probably the pleasure of the Dogs returning and thrusting her up in view.

It

It is very common for the fleet Dog to be the great favourite, though it would be much better if he was hanged, or exchanged. Be a Dog in his own nature ever so good, yet he is not good in that pack that is too slow for him. There is most times work enough for every one of the train, and every one ought to bear his part; but this is impossible for the heavy ones to do, if they are run out of breath by the unproportionable speed of a light-heeled leader. For it is not enough that they are able to keep up, which a true Hound will labour hard for, but they must be able to do it with ease, with retention of breath and spirits, and with their tongues at command. It must never be expected that the indentures of the Hare can be well covered, or her doubles struck off, (nor is the sport worth a farthing,) if the Harriers run yelping in a long string, like Deer or Fox Hounds.

Another thing I would advise my friends, is to hang up every liar and chanter,

chanters, not sparing even those that are silly and trifling, without nose or sagacity. It is common enough in numerous kennels to keep some for their musick or beauty, but this is perfectly wrong. It is a certain maxim that every Dog which does no good, does a great deal of hurt; they serve only to foil the ground, and confound the scent; to scamper before and interrupt their betters in the most difficult points. And I may venture to affirm, by long experience, that four or five couple, all good and trusty Hounds, will do more execution than thirty or forty, where a third of them are eager and headstrong, and, like coxcombs among men, noisy in doing nothing.

Above all I abhor joining with strangers, for this is the way to spoil and debauch the staunchest Hounds, to turn the best mettled into mad-headed gallopers, liars, and chatterers, and to put them on nothing but out-running their rivals, and over-running the scent. The emulation
of

of leading (in Dogs and their Masters) has been the utmost ruin of many a good cry. Nor are strange Huntsmen of much better consequence than strange Companions ; for as the skill and excellence of these animals consist in use and habit, they should always be accustomed to the same voice, the same notes, or hallowings, and the same terms of chiding, cherishing, pressing, or recalling ; nor should the country fellows be allowed, in their transports, to extend their throats.

It will be taken ill if I should also speak against a change of game, because mere 'Squires would be at a great loss to kill some of their time, had they nothing to kill, when Hares are out of season. However*, I am well satisfied that the best Harriers are those that know no other. Nor is it adviseable to let them change for

* " They should never be suffered to hunt Foxes, which
 " does them the greatest harm, and they are never staunch
 " when there is occasion for it." XENOPHON.

a fresh

a fresh Hare, as long as they can possibly follow the old, nor to take off their noses from the scent they are upon, for the cutting shorter or gaining of ground. This last is the common trick with Pot-hunters, but as it is unfair, and barbarous to the Hare, so you will seldom find it of advantage to the Hounds.





SIX LETTERS.

UPON

HUNTING.



H

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LETTER I.

The ART and PLEASURE of HUNTING.

THE solicitations I have received
 T so frequently from your Lordship
 to give my sentiments on Hare-
 hunting, hath at last induced me to put
 pen to paper; but I must desire you will
 consider that, as little can be said on the
 subject with positive truth and certainty,
 great part of what I shall advance
 must be deemed matter of conjecture;
 yet such as bears strong features or re-
 semblance of reality, being founded
 chiefly on observations, made in a long
 course of years and experience.

H 2

Most

Most persons, I may venture to say all, at one or other time of life, are fond of some peculiar amusement. Your Lordship cannot forget in our frequent debates on diversions, I have often declared Hare-hunting has been mine. What contributed to my liking it were, the early impressions I received in favour of the sport, from a grandfather and father, who made it their particular delight. I confess to your Lordship the being prejudiced so much in its favour still, that I esteem few diversions equal nor any preferable to it. The Buck, Stag, Hind, or Fox-chace, no doubt have their delights; but of such sort as cannot heartily be enjoyed, except by persons of ample fortune and circumstance, like your Lordship, and such indeed do, or seem chiefly to delight in those sports, though many that pursue them, on examination of their hearts, I dare say will be conscious they do it more from a motive of affectation than real love.

A Lover of Hunting almost every man is, or would be thought; but twenty in the

the field after a Hare, my Lord, find more delight and sincere enjoyment than one in twenty in a Fox-chace, the former consisting of an endless variety of accidental delights, the latter little more than hard riding, the pleasure of clearing some dangerous leap, the pride of striding the best Nag, and shewing somewhat of the bold Horseman, and (equal to any thing) of being first in at the death, after a chace frequently from county to county, and perhaps above half the way out of sight or hearing of the Hounds. So that, but for the name of Fox-hunting, a man might as well mount at his stable-door, and determine to gallop twenty miles an end into another county. I do not doubt but at the conclusion of such an imaginary chace, if he came to his inn safe, he would enjoy all that first and chief satisfaction several Gentlemen do in their hearts after a Fox-chace, from the happiness of having cleared many double ditches, five bar gates, and dangerous floughs, without

without the misfortune of one broken rib, notwithstanding two or three confounded falls in taking flying leaps.

After a Hare these accidents are not usually met with, the diversion is of another sort. When Pufs is started she seldom fails to run a ring, the first is generally the worst (for horse or foot) that may happen in the whole hunt. For the fences * once leaped, or the gates once opened, makes a clear passage oftentimes for every turn she takes afterwards.

The case is otherwise with Stag, Buck, or Fox, when either is on foot, ten to one, after a few turns, if he does not take end ways, and lead the keen Sportsman into continued new unexperienced dangers. If he is unhorsed there lies the hero of the day, undistinguished, unassisted; if not, he has the pleasure at

* The fences being leaped can be of no use to those that follow, he should have said, broken down.

the end of the chace of finding himself a dozen miles perhaps from his own home.

The former of these advantages made a noble Peer turn off the finest kennel England boasted. The best of Conforts to this day deplores her Silurian Prince, who, by a broken rib, was cut off in the flower of his age.

Observe the nimble Harrier, my Lord, continues the double, on foot or horseback, according as age, ability, or fortune impowers him, enjoys every note of the harmony, closely pursues his pack, is seldom thrown out of sight or hearing, and, above all, enjoys a hunt delightful, but not dangerous, as the Fox-chace, moderate, but not so laborious, in the course of which his satisfaction is in no small degree heightened (whether he pursues, crosses, or guards the foil,) by the frequent views of the Game.

How

How quick the blood circulates in the vigorous youth, and at the unexpected sight of the Hare, how nimbly pants the heart with surprizing transports, till then unfelt? How are the spirits cheared, the long congealed blood warmed of limping age, the memorable exploits of twenty-six brought full into view, and feebly mimicked at threescore and ten? How are both young and old lost in delightful enchantments, when Puss has balked the Dogs, dropt the Pack, and on some rising hillock plays in sight her little tricks, leaps here, doubles there, now sits an end, listens, then crouched, (as if sunk into the earth) deceives the unexperienced eye, and creeps to a *quat*.

These are raptures unenjoyed in Fox or any other chace; but Hare-hunting may be as disagreeable to the Park-keeper, Forester, or Fox-hunter, as the contrary to me, and each may, and no doubt hath, as much to advance in favour of his amusement as I can possibly say of mine; therefore

therefore it would be impudent to declaim against other people's diversions, to enhance the satisfaction found in mine.

It is humour and inclination makes one or other partake of any pastime or not; and the delight found in pursuing a poor harmless Hare, with a parcel of ugly roaring Hounds, to a man of cold, slow circulation, or a fribble of meek effeminate temper, may appear, on consideration, inhuman and barbarous as bull-baiting.

The Buck, or Blood-hound, has little to do with the Hare; the Otter and Fox-hound (the stanch finder excepted) will often join in the hunt, it being very difficult to have a complete kennel of either sort, so firmly stanch, but many will freely hunt each others quarry, notwithstanding Gentlemen breed ever so true, which in a great measure is owing to some casualty in the entrance of them, or in their entering themselves when at keeping. At trying young Hounds, great regard should be had to the quarry
I they

they are entered at, because a Dog generally prefers the game he was at first used to, and blooded with. This few Sportsmen attend to, but, on the contrary, if they can bring their young Hounds to stoop and challenge a Cat, Coney, or Red-herring dragged by a string, think themselves well off with a fine promising breed.

The like may be observed to stand good, in some proportion, with respect to the situation. The Dogs that have been entered in, and accustomed to the Champain country, like hunting there, before the low-inclosed turf; so low-land Hounds perform better in woodlands and enclosures, than the downs and sandy heaths.

The time for entering young Dogs * takes place according to the season they

* " Bitch puppies should be first taken out to hunt at eight months old, and Dogs at ten months." XENOPHON.

Allowance must be made for the warmer climate of Greece.

(59)

are whelped in; in my judgment they
should be a twelve month old, eighteen
months is a great age.



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LETTER II.

*Concerning the Sorts of HARRIERS,
and Difference.*

THE Hounds most in use and proper for Hare-hunting, may be confined to few sorts, and each excellent in nature. To wit, the deep-tongued, thick lipped, broad and long-hung southern Hounds.

The fleet sharp-nosed Dog, ears narrow and pointed, deep chested, with thin shoulders, portending a quarter of the Fox strain.

The rough wire-haired Hound, thick-quartered, well hung, not too fleshy shouldered

shouldered, together with the rough or smooth Beagle.

Each of these sorts, as I said before, have there excellencies, &c. It is not possible, with justice, to commend one before another, for kind, colour or service, preference being given according to the humours and inclinations of Sportsmen, the tribe of whom are very numerous, and, of consequence, different in opinion.

He that delights in a long chace of six hours, often more, and to be in with the Dogs all the time, let him breed of the southern Hounds first mentioned, or such heavy Dogs as Suffex Gentlemen run in the weald. They make good deep bass musick, afford great diversion, and considering how dirty the country is, (notwithstanding a hunt often lasts all day long) fatigue the healthy footman very little.

In an open country where there is good riding, prefer the second sort, with a quarter of the Fox-strain, these suit the more eager, active Horseman, and spend
their

their tongues generously, making delightful harmony, and at the same time go at such a rate, a Hare durst not play many tricks before them; they seldom allow her time to loiter, she must run and continue her foiling or change foil, if the latter she dies; keep in Huntsman, fresh ground on the turf, is in some degree a continued view, otherwise hang your Dogs, (barring no extraordinary accidents of highways and sheep blemish) for I would no more excuse the loss of a Hare on fresh sward, unless the Huntsman's fault, which is too often the case, than I would a kennel of Fox-hounds losing Reynard in full chace; the reasons against it in both diversions are the same.

The slow Hounds first mentioned generally pack best. Of the second sort, many not being of equal speed, (for it is hard to procure an even kennel of fast Hounds,) will be found to tail, which is an inconvenience, for the hind Dogs labour on to overtake the leading Hounds, and seldom or ever stop, nor are of the least use but
to

to enlarge the cry, unless at an over-run; which happens at the top of the morn, for a quarter of a mile together, then the old Hounds, thrown out or tailed, often come up, and hit the fault off.

The southern Dogs are not so guilty of running a-head, for as they pack well together, from their equality of speed, (it being easier to excel the slow than the fast) at the least balk, there are ten noses on the ground for one.

The third species of Hounds mentioned I never saw an entire kennel of, being in some parts not much encouraged: They are of northern breed, and in great esteem, being bold Dogs, and by many Huntsmen preferred for the Otter and Martin: In some places they are encouraged for Fox-hounds, but bad to breed from, being too subject to degenerate and produce thick, low, heavy shouldered Dogs unfit for the chase.

Beagles, rough or smooth, have their admirers, they spend their tongues free in treble or tenor, and go a greater rate than

than the Southern Hounds, but tail abominably. They run low to ground, therefore enjoy the scent better than taller Dogs, especially when the atmosphere lies low. In an enclosed country they do best, as they muse with the Hare, and at trailing or default, are pretty good for hedge-rows; yet I have seen eighty couple in the field, out of which, in a winter's sport, I observed not four couple that could be depended on, the majority being so propense to challenge feather or fleak; yet by the assistance of a clever Huntsman, and the foil well trod, I have sometimes seen pretty diversion.

Of the two sorts I prefer the rough, or wire haired, being generally good shouldered Dogs, and well filleted.

Smooth haired Beagles are commonly deep hung, thick lipped, and large nostrilled, but often so soft, solid, and bad quartered, as to be shoulder-hook and crippled the first season's hunt, and have frequently that unpardonable fault of
crook

crook legs, like the Tarrier, or right Bath Turnspit.

I know admirers of this sort, but they are no favourites of mine, few will endure a tolerable hunt, or at default bear hard charging. After two hours running, observe them crippled and down, the Huntsman may go on himself, for what assistance many of them give him, and it is plain from their form and shape, (for nature makes nothing in vain) that they are not designed for hard exercise.

So much for Harriers, a deal may be said for and against the several kinds: It is a wide unsettled point to give opinion upon; but to sum up the whole in a few words, stanch, true Hounds of any sort, are desirable, and whoever has them of pretty equal age and speed, with the requisites of packing and hunting well together, whether southern, northern, Foxstrain, or Beagle, can boast an invaluable advantage in the diversion, and which few Gentlemen, let them breed ever so true, can attain to but in years.

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The properties to be considered in the choice of a Hound, were settled, my Lord, long before you and I were born, and my opinion can be little more than an acquisition from former sportsmen. However prefer the Dog of a middling size, with his back longer than round, nose large, with nostrils bold and wide, chest deep and capacious, fillets great and high, haunches large, hams strait, the sole hard and dry, claws large, ears wide, thin and deep, more round than sharp, eyes large and protuberant, forehead prominent, and upper lips thick, and deeper than the lower jaw.

The manner of keeping Hounds in kennel, I suppose I am not expected to enter into, be your Huntsman a fellow of very indifferent judgement, and not one of the most nasty lazy rascals, he will take care to keep his kennel sweet, his Dogs clean littered, aired and watered, their provisions sufficiently boiled, or rather stewed. Avoid coarse, raw and parboiled
flesh,

flesh, nothing spoils the faculty of scenting more.

As to the method of breeding Dogs, I shall only observe, Gentlemen cannot be too careful, at the proper season, of the Sires they want the succession from.

A very little spoils the litter, and notwithstanding all the care and vigilance possible, litter after litter, sometimes prove false and degenerate, from as high bred creatures as any in the kingdom.

I kept a Bitch in my chamber from the earliest tokens of her growing proud, and had her so close warded, I could have taken my oath in all the time, she never saw any other Dog; yet the whelps inherited few or none of their Sires qualities, nay scarce the colour; whence I proved, that a Dog and Bitch of the highest blood, may fail of getting tolerable puppies. The like is often experienced among Horses. How nature errs in this particular (if it may be called an error) I submit to some more experienced naturalist.

Talking with a learned Phyfician (a great connoiffeur in pointing and fetting Dogs) upon the fubject of puppies, he told the following marvellous tale of a Bitch he had of the fetting kind.

As he travelled from Midhurft into Hampshire, going through a country village, the Maftiffs and Cur-dogs ran out barking, as is ufual when Gentlemen ride by fuch places; among them he obferved a little ugly Pedlar's Cur particularly eager and fond of ingratiating himfelf with the Bitch. The Doctor ftopped to water upon the fpot, and whilft his Horfe drank, could not help remarking how amorous the Cur continued, and how fond and courteous the Bitch feemed to her admirer; but provoked in the end, to fee a creature of Phillis's rank and breed, fo obfequious to fuch mean addreffes, drew one of his pistols and fhot the Dog dead on the fpot; then alighted, and taking the Bitch into his arms, carried her before him feveral miles. The Doctor relates farther, that madam, from that day,

day, would eat little or nothing, having in a manner lost her appetite, she had no inclination to go abroad with her master, or come when he called; but seemed to repine like a creature in love, and express sensible concern for the loss of her gallant.

Partridge season came on, but she had no nose; the Doctor did not take the bird before her. However, in process of time, Phillis waxed proud. The Doctor was heartily glad of it, and physically apprehended it would be a means of weaning her from all thoughts of her deceased admirer; accordingly he had her confined in due time, and ward by an admirable Setter of high blood, which the Doctor galloped his grey stone-horse forty miles an end to fetch for the purpose. And, that no accident might happen from the carelessness of drunken, idle servants, the charge was committed to a trusty old woman housekeeper; and, as absence from patients would permit, the Doctor assiduously attended the affair himself.

himself. But lo! when the days of whelping came, Phillis did not produce one puppy but what was, in all respects, the very picture and colour of the poor Dog he had shot so many months before the Bitch was in heat.

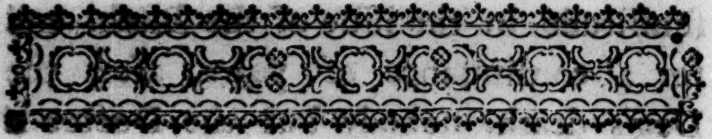
This affair not more surprized than enraged the Doctor: For some time he differed, almost to parting, with his old faithful housekeeper, being unjustly jealous of her care; such behaviour before she never knew from him, but, alas, what remedy? He kept the Bitch many years, yet, to his infinite concern, she never brought a litter, but exactly similar to the Pedlar's Cur. He disposed of her to a friend of his in a neighbouring county, but to no purpose, the vixen still brought such Puppies. Whence the Doctor tenaciously maintained, Bitch and Dog may fall passionately in love with each other.

That such creatures, especially the female, may at particular times like, or prefer, I grant the Doctor; but how the
im-

impression of the Dog (admitting to favour him there was any) could occasion similitude in the issue of the Bitch, and for a continuance of years, after the Dog's death, nobody but the Doctor is capable of defending, who to this day relates and justifies the truth of every circumstance I have mentioned. So much for Dogs, Harriers especially. I hope the digression will be pardoned, and, if not disagreeable, I shall proceed with a page on the Quarry.

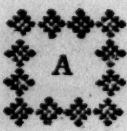


LETTER



LETTER III.

*The Sorts and Difference of HARES,
being of no less Signification than
the preceding Letters.*


 Hare is called by Sportsmen,
 within the first year a Leveret,
 at twelve months old a Hare; at
 two years old and so on, a great, a large,
 or a flaming Hare. I never heard them
 distinguished by other names, nor do I
 know more proper.

The derivation of the term is not at
 all momentous to the Huntsman; he is
 sensible when he sees her every body calls
 such

such a creature a Hare. Your Lordship knows the Ancients called this animal by various appellations.

The Hebrews called the Hare* *Arnebeth*, which being feminine, possessed the ge-

* אֲרֵנֶבֶת, the Hare, from אָרֶה to *crop*, and נֵיב the *produce of the earth*, these animals being very remarkable for destroying the fruits of the earth. The learned BOCHART, who gives this interpretation of the word, excellently defends it, by shewing from history, that these animals have, at different times desolated the islands of Astypalæa, Lens, and Carpathus. To this account, for the sake of the learned Reader, I shall add the following elegant lines concerning these animals from *Bargetus Cygneget*, lib. iii. by which it appears, they are great devourers of all kind of herbs and vegetables:

“Deerpunt læti turgentia gramina campi,
 “Et culmos segetum, et fibras tellure repostas
 “Herbarum, et lento morsus in cortice figunt
 “Arboris, atque udos attendent undique libros;
 “Nec parcunt strato pomarum, aut glandis acervo,
 “Aut viciæ, aut milio, aut proceræ frondibus ulmi,
 “Præcipue gratæ sylvestria gramina menthæ
 “Quæque colunt riguas in culto Syfimbria valles,
 “Et vaga serpillæ, et pulegi nobile gramen
 “Percipiunt.” PARKHURST *Heb. Lex.*

I have been informed by a Gentleman of experience and observation, that he has found Haws in the droppings of Hares during hard weather.

L

nerality

nerality with a notion, no Hares were masculine, and the opinion so much prevailed, that to this day not one man in a thousand occasionally talks of a Hare, but speaks in the feminine gender, and uses the epithets Her or She. The Greeks sometimes called the Hare *Δαγώες*, for his immoderate lust; at other times *πρωξ*, implying extraordinary fear. The Latins, *Lepus quasi levi pes*, or Lightfoot, denoting swiftness of feet.

As to any real difference in the species *, I confess myself no judge, I always found they corresponded in shape and similitude; but to exceed, like other creatures, in size and abilities, which I conceive proceeds from nothing more than their difference of feed and situation, and may be ranged under the few distinctions of the

* XENOPHON says, "There are two species of Hares, "one large, mottled with black, and a great deal of "white in the forehead; the other less, of a yellowish "color, and having little white." He also observes, that "mountain Hares are the swiftest, those bred in a plain "country, less so, and marsh Hares the slowest of any."

down

down Hare, the field or enclosure Hare, the marshy and wood-land Hare.

The mountain or down Hares feed short and sweet, breathe a fine air and enjoy an extensive compass for exercise, they are found to excel in strength or celerity, and stand a hunt longer than any Hares. In dry seasons they commonly make excursions into the vales for diversion and relief, and I have remarked myself, and have learned from Shepherds and Hare-finders, (by some Wags not unjustly called **Myopers*) that Hares are never more plenty on the hills than in wet weather; the reason of which is plain, they feed, form, and exercise on drier turf than the vallies afford.

Every Down Hare has a multitude of seats, which (as the weather directs) she changes from time to time, and from practice to some innate principle, returns to again provided she quitted on her own accord and undisturbed.

* From *Mun*† winking the eyes, q. d. *μυνε' οφθαλμοις*

The enclosure, marshy, or woodland Hares are experienced to be slower, weaker, and more unfit to endure hard hunting than the down Hares, the situation and manner of their living being opposite, they relive on too rank strong food, and that too near their forms, their circle of exercise is more confined, and liable to disturbance, and the air they breathe is less pure and correct, whence proceeds purfiness and short wind. Of this sort are the Hares in the wealds, many of which I have seen when paunched with ulcerate lungs and unsound.

* There are another sort of Hares to be met with (though very seldom) different from either of the kinds mentioned, that

* "Those Hares that wander in all places are most puzzling in the chace, for they know the nearest ways, they generally run up hill or on level ground, if they find any uneven ground they run over it in an irregular manner, but very seldom run down hill." XENOXHON.

Mr. Pennant in his British Zoology remarks, that a Hare when started, always makes to a rising ground, which he attributes to the length of her hind legs.

wander

wander about like vagrants, living at large, and with indifference, in all places, feeding vastly uncertain, sometimes in the enclosure, hedge-row, brake, or strong covert, at other times in the open common or fields. These are the Hares for diversion, and most difficult to judge off, and dangerous to pursue. They ramble through the barn-yard in the night, and disregard the gaunt growling Mastiff, traverse the orchard and garden, intrepid and fearless, explore the dangerous pond head, nor dread the roaring waters, regale on the virgin grass, or tender clover, or young turnip, or (as some hidden cause directs) neglect them all, fonder to bark, or browse the budding twig.

When started, they seldom keep any certain ring, but drive on irregularly, trying all sorts of ground, the turf, the hard highway, the watery puddle, or dry dusty fallow, and lead the weary Sportsman many a painful step, and through many a dangerous passage.

These

These are the old Witches, that afford inexhaustible subjects after Hunting, that make the glass pass brisk about, the cheeks glow, chins wag, and every faltering tongue provoke, that the whole edifice resounds the continued boisterous roar, impatient each to over hunt or recount his part. The inexperienced audience, to every orator by turns, attention deal; but if the Huntsman deigns the view to hollow, or foil over hunt again, sudden silence reigns, and ravished with the deafening clamour of the pursuit, with eager infatuation, all applaud, and the most apocryphal tales assent to and believe; whilst he! wretch arbitrary, (though illiterate) with ignorance and pride, native to himself, ascribes some passages, notable in the chace, to his own good judgment and understanding; others, less remarkable, to the poor Hare's contrivance and cunning.

As I am entered upon the subject of Hares, it may not be impertinent to observe, how kind Providence has been in
the

the formation of this animal; and it is well, indeed, nature has been so beneficent, there being scarce a creature breathing, wild or domestic, but is an enemy to the poor defenceless Hare. Birds of the air, as well as beasts of the field, seem in perpetual war with her. The very reptile Adder will kill the old Hare, passive and defenceless in the combat: Nor does the Leveret feed the small circle about its little home, secure and unmolested by the despicable Bat and Owl. Wherefore as the most proper means for preservation, (amidst such a numerous tribe of enemies) nature has kindly endowed her with a temper excessive timid, continually watchful, and listening, and ever eager, even to rashness, to turn from the most trifling approach of danger; all her dependance, being in that talent alone, and which the wise Contriver of all things, has ordained every part to assist and compleat. If not unworthy, pray take a survey, of this little creature; this wonder of animals: Not more the charm and delight
of

of the Sportsman, than his Beagles. No creature in the universe, leaves a more grateful enchanting scent, than the Hare; the smell of the Martin is not more ravishing to the Hounds. Please to view his short round head; look how extremely proper and excellently fashioned it is for flight. Was he to maintain himself, or seize his food by means of celerity, a longer nose and head, would have been much more expedient and necessary.

See how long the ears, how large and open, how fixed on the head, and when pricked how close together point, nicely calculated to hear the enemy at a distance, and receive timely warning of the least approach of danger.

The eyes ingeniously placed on each side, divided by the whole breadth of the forehead, not situated in the front like a Dog or Cat's eyes, to see only the segment of a circle forward, but sideways, to observe almost a whole circle, being formed so as to turn any way, to spy impending dangers from all quarters,

ters*, and secure himself in time. A farther remark, and worthy observation, is, the creature, waking or sleeping, perpetually watches; his eyes being continually open and so protuberant, round and large, the lids are far too short to cover them even when at sleep.

View the breast, how narrow, and at same time how deep and capacious the chest; for as the lungs are in a continual state of violent expansions, during the time he is hunted, and by the prodigious frequent inspiration and expiration, become in the end so vastly distended, as to require a much larger space than is assigned for the purpose, the chest therefore is fashioned to receive more breath, or give the lungs more room to perform their office, almost than any creature.

* Xenophon, who is minutely accurate in his description of this animal, observes, that "When she wakes she winks her eyelids, but when she sleeps she keeps them continually open, without motion, having her eyes fixed."

Take notice of the back, how straight, and rather long for covering more ground in running, and well filleted or double-reined, for strength in the performance

The scut short and high, haunches wide, large and finewy, legs straight and proportionably long, with such feet no creature in the animal creation can boast. Now I have mentioned the feet, permit me to observe a common notion, I might say an error, there being several egregious ones about Hares; but the following, I don't doubt you have not only heard but read of; and that is, if you ask several Sportsmen, why a low-land enclosure, or marsh Hare, endures not Hunting so long as the hilly or up-land Hare, the answer frequently is, that the former generally fill themselves too full of pasture before the form, and that, by frequent treading on the soft turf and moist paths, become far more tender-footed, and unfit to bear hard running, than the up-hill Hare, that uses the hard highways and dry turf, which is to be met

met with, three parts of the year, on the downs or hilly land.

As to the first of such Hunters, or Writers so seeming plain reasons, I beg their pardon, but most absolutely disagree with their opinion, it being more plain and natural to believe, such Hares never fill themselves too full, as they call it. Unerring Nature, doubtless, instructs them better than to over-eat themselves, or gorge so much to retard them in their celerity, which is their only defence, and preservation; it cannot be I am positive. The poor fearful creatures satisfy Nature, and no more; their time of feeding begins according to the season, and ends about the certain time, afterwards a proper space is duly employed in drying, airing, exercising, and sporting, till the approach of morning warns them to seek or return to their proper retirements.

They do not glutton on their food, like the wise Heads that hunt them. Eat, for the cheer is dainty, we may meet with none like it to-morrow. But rather, too
often

often before Nature is contented retire, molested and alarmed in the night, to some adjoined thicket, and there finish their repast, on the shaded spray or four herb; happy in their safety and solitude. Or sometimes, as Nature dictates, when the southern tempest pours down the dreadful torrent, or the chilling north spreads the surface with his silvered mantle, sit close in form, till better times ensue; content with no repast.

Whether this opinion with those Sportsmen who judge of Hares immoderate eating by themselves, and because they have experienced an impediment in their heels, from a crammed belly, think Hares meet with the same, may be of any weight, I cannot say nor do I care: I have a better opinion of honest faithful Nature's dictates, than their idle whims and notions. As to the other part offered, that low-land Hares are tender footed, I protest, I smile at the thought of such a shallow opinion. Tender feet in Dogs are owing to the softness of their soles, or
that

that fleshy substance called the ball or toes of the feet. This tenderness is natural to some, and is a fault in the breed, one of their excellencies (being as before mentioned) hard dry soles; in others it proceeds from disuse, in which it is soon remedied, moderate exercise every day, will soon bring the feet into order, and make them sufficiently hard, to endure diversion.

But as to the Hare being tender in her feet, a little observation may convince such casuists of their mistake; Nature having been in this particular singularly liberal to the poor Hare, by supplying her with such feet, as are absolutely free from, and not subject to tenderness; or scarce susceptible of hurt, so as to incommode, or retard her in running.

Pray observe what a small web there is between the claws, and the admirable deficiency of soles or toes underneath! With submission, what hath she to fear then from the flinty highway, the uneven severe frosty path, the poignant bramble, or piercing black-thorn? No-
thing

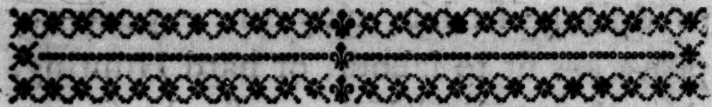
thing---the balls of her feet being supplied, instead of hard flesh, with a strong coarse fur, suited so charmingly for the purpose, that she treads soft, run what road she will; and never easier, or more to advantage, than on the hardest beaten path, or stony rugged road. The very surface that cripples a Dog, she glides over with ease and pleasure. Take notice in a frost, for the reasons advanced, what advantage she has in running, superior to most creatures; whilst the generous steed founders with moderate gallops, and the fleet Greyhound starts his claws, and tears his soles to pieces, on the rugged frosty paths; she treads soft, as if she went on woolpacks, or rebounds and leaps upon her very claws. View her again on the merry highway, though she skims over the clay and puddle, like an arrow from the bow, yet leaps so tender, the surface is scarce brushed by her tread. But enough, I shall only farther advance to such tender footed brethren one reason, and a true one, why a low-land

Here

Hare, or by what appellation they chuse to distinguish her, may on experience, prove less fit to labour, or hard Hunting, than the up-land Hare, instead of a too great plenitude or tenderness of feet, is occasioned from the too strong or rank feed, (I don't mean the quantity but quality) and confined circle for exercise; whence proceeds short wind and pursiness.



LET-



LETTER IV.

*Some Perfections of the HARE, and
remarkable Qualities of other
CREATURES, very proper to
be read, or not read.*



Otwithstanding the arguments
already made use of, in des-
cribing several parts of the
Hare, and how each is adapted to contri-
bute towards the preservation of the
whole; methinks I hear you say what!
is this extraordinary creature so complete,
as to have no fault? Does this wonder of
animals suffer no inconveniency from
any

any of those fine parts she is composed of? Few creatures in the animal, or other creation, are formed absolutely perfect and free from blemish. How comes the Hare so frequently to lose her life, and in such a simple manner? How happens she so often to run headlong into visible danger; into the Traveller's open arms, or House-cur's jaws, without discretion enough to turn to right or left, to avoid such accidents?

To this may be answered, the poor Hare is far from being without failings, nay, on the contrary, hath numberless imperfections. The very excellence of running from, or avoiding one danger, notoriously drives her head-long into another, till she meets her ruin. She is too often stupid and senseless of the danger that lies most apparent, and plain as possible, which has occasioned innumerable arguments among Huntsmen, and many reasons have been given for it by Naturalists, to you I submit the following:

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First

First, I beg to observe, notwithstanding the description given of Hares ears, and how advantageously situated, there is an inconveniency attends them, which perhaps never happened within the consideration of several good Sportsmen. It is natural for mankind, who have never reflected on the matter, to think, because they have an ear on each side the head, and can listen to a Kennel of Hounds, whether they run to right or left, straight forward or backward, that a Hare can do the same; upon my word those who think so are egregiously mistaken, a Hare under pursuit has the saddest imperfect assistance from her ears straight before or sideways, that can possibly be, her chief excellence being only in a sensibility of the sounds that lie behind her. This is the perfection and primary cause she owes her preservation to, her talent of running being only a secondary quality.

It is this ability warns her in time to steal from form, and deceive the creeping Poacher;

Poacher; by this blessing she outstrips the fleet Greyhound, attentive to the noise of every stretch, and sound of every pant: Or when started by the sagacious Pack, to continue her course, with resolute expedition, till quite free from their clamour; yet, at the same time, misapprehensive, and deaf to the noise of enemies before, alone intent and all her faculties employed, on that single point of hearing, and running from the danger that pursues.

I shall be laughed at, perhaps, by half the Hunters in England, for advancing such a seeming improbability; but upon my word it is true. Talk with any Anatomist, that has inspected the structure of this creature's ears, and he will give you reasons in justification of what I have laid down.

As the only preservation a Hare has is flying from danger, how natural and plain is it for a common understanding, to reconcile the necessity of her being endued with such a proper assisting sensation,

sation, whereby she may receive timely information of the distant or near approach of the enemy.

Without such quickness of hearing from behind, a Hare might run blind, or to death, after she was out of harm's way, for want of being sensible of it. I challenge all the Huntsmen in Great Britain, that are of veracity, to say, a fresh Hare, started or coursed, ever stops or turns her head to look back; how is she sensible, then, she is clear from the enemy that pursued her? She has no eyes backwards. True, but she has ears that answer the purpose.

I have heard it confidently maintained by several, and have read in Authors, who were more Huntsmen in speculation than practice, that a Hare's ears lead the way when she is hunted: "With one, (say they,) "she hearkeneth to the cry of "of the Hounds, and the other stretched "forth like a sail, to promote her "course." Ridiculous notion! Whenever she pricks her ears an end, or
draw

draws one a-part, or more forward than the other, it is to hearken more distinct and nice on that side the forwardest ear is, and not like a sail to promote her course.

Had Nature designed any singular aid to her feet from stretching forth the ears, she would have supplied her with two pair; one to lie flat on the shoulders for listening, whilst she sailed by the other; and she never would have more occasion for both than when severely coursed, at which time the ears she has may be observed to lie flat on her neck; and though she is obliged, on this occasion, to play all her tricks to escape, to try the wind every way for advantage, yet, in all the shifts she makes, I never observed this quality of sailing by the ear, both being strictly engaged on receiving the smallest sound of the Greyhound behind, by which she accordingly, more or less, retards or increases her celerity. There is nothing more plain and certain, than that Providence hath endued every creature with
some

some excellence peculiar to itself. To one endowments proper for preservation and defence, to another means necessary for the attainment of food and nourishment.

Ask a Country Fellow at dusk of the evening, why yon Owl sits on the barri door, or perches upon the gate-post, rail, or beam? He will presently inform you, he is watching for a mouse. But a man that is no very eminent Naturalist knows the Owl is hearkening rather than looking for a Mouse, for Owls have ears, and delicate ones, I assure you, on which they depend for their sustenance, in an equal, nay greater degree than the eyes. Their ears give them the first and earliest notice of the motion of prey, long before it comes into view for the eyes to distinguish it. Yet, though it may be granted Owls hearken, as well as look for prey, I would not have you think because they have ears, they hear all manner of ways. No, they have no good use of them, but from what happens beneath; their hearing

ing is very imperfect before, or sideways, nor have they any advantage at all in hearing what happens above. Admit they had, to what use or purpose would it tend? They have not the least hope or expectation of Mice hanging over their heads, but the contrary. All creatures, as I said before, boast some peculiar excellence. The crafty Fox that scouts about, and hath various means of acquiring subsistence depends greatly on a talent of hearing from above superior to most, and equal to all creatures. What principle do you imagine directs him on his patrols, to lurk underneath, or climb the pear or plumb tree where the poultry roost? Not so much his eyes as his ears: A feather is scarce moved but he hears it.

On the other hand, the vigorous wild or Pole-cat's blessing consists in hearing directly forward, deaf as an Adder (when he is prowling) to prey or danger behind. I offer this not as conjecture, but matter of certainty, the animal's ears being constructed for such singularities, especially
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the " passage directing to the *os petrosum*;
 " which, in an Owl's ear, is produced
 " farther out above than below, for the
 " greater and better reception of sound
 " from below. In a Fox exactly the
 " contrary, and calculated to intercept the
 " nicest noise from above; in a Cat far be-
 " hind, to take the forward sound; but
 " the ear of a Hare is supplied with a
 " tube directed extremely backward."
 As I already said, she dreads no danger so
 much as what lies behind her, therefore
 her ears are capable, by reason of such
 backward tubes, of receiving the smallest
 sound that happens from that quarter. I
 could instance notable differences in the
 ears of other creatures, but it being
 foreign to my purpose, shall proceed to
 another well experienced deficiency of
 the poor Hare, which is her want of sight.

* Almost every one has experienced

* " When she is pursued, the fear of the Dogs and Hun-
 " ters takes away her presence of mind, on which account
 " she often runs unknowingly against many things, and
 " sometimes falls into the snare." XENOPHON.

that

that a Hare sees very imperfect straight forward; a sad inconveniency you will say, not to see well, nor hear the immediate danger that is seemingly so plain: Why really so it is, and the means of shortening her little life, frequently much sooner than the most violent hunt would do.

I have often heard say, when a Hare has been knocked down, or caught by a Dog relaid, that she ran herself blind, which is a notion of the most vulgar and illiterate species.

Some maintain Hares to be of the tribe of nocturnal animals, that cannot see well in the day, their eyes being much the same as Cats or Owls, and of a texture susceptible of far nicer touches of the rays of light, than creatures more habituated to day-light.

It is true, I am no Oculist, nor competent judge of the structure of eyes, but if common reason may be attended to, (which every man has a right to offer,) it is natural to conjecture, night or day is

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indif-

indifferent to the Hare, and that she only prefers the former to relieve in, it being the most peaceable time, and freest from danger. The disadvantage of wanting quick sight before, in my opinion, may chiefly be accounted for from the situation of the eyes being fixed in the head, at a distance far from each other, like Horses; and to see forward perfect, requires some such contrivance as the eye-leathers that Waggoners have at their horses collars, the better to occasion the eyes being directed more forward than backward; for as they are formed to turn in the sockets all ways, forward to the nose, upward, downward, or back toward the shoulders, it needs no great fund of philosophy to judge, that by so much as the eyes are turned out of the centre of sight to look upward, such a proportion is wanting to see downward; and so much as they are strained toward the nose to see forward, so much is required for sight backward, supposing the head to be steady and fixed, which is the case

case with the Hare that runs fast; at other times she turns and manages her head as she pleases. But in an even posture of the body the eyes appear situated to see quickest and best, full on each side. Whence it arises, that the reason a Hare, when hunted or coursed, sees not so clear directly forward, is, that being chiefly intent and apprehensive of the danger behind, she employs all her senses, all her judgment, to escape that danger; and the more effectually to accomplish it, depends not alone on the ears, but, by endeavouring to see it, strains her eyes as backward as possible, according to the degree of terror she is in; insomuch, that for want of a due proportion of the eyes employed before, she becomes in a manner blind to the enemy that lies so apparent. Any person may experience truths of this sort that will cast his eyes upward, downward, or from side to side, he will soon find, when he points them one way, how imperfect his sight is the other.

Whether a Hare's eyes receive any inconvenience from being so large, full, and convex, I do not pretend to determine. Oculists say, such eyes at proper distances, see objects (in proportion to the degree of convexity) more perfect and large than those less convex; or if the eyes suffer damage, by being exposed night and day to dusts and insects, because the lids do not cover them completely, I know not; but be what will the cause, it is certain, Hares do not see so perfect before as sideways, or asslant.

And indeed, Nature in some measure has compensated this want, and likewise that of hearing, by a most incomparable sense of smelling; I do not mean the sort of smelling peculiar to Hounds, but a species that Sportsmen term winding; being that quality, when a Dog holds up his nose, which he winds carrion by, or a springing Spaniel the bird when shot: A Hare has this talent in nice perfection. Take your stand in a most private corner, if she has the wind, you will seldom see her

her but at a distance; and though you may happen to spy her far off, making boldly towards you, mark her, in due time she will break the road, and take some other track. Yet I must observe, notwithstanding this happy endowment secures her from the lurking Poacher, it often fails to frustrate the snarer's deeper designs; he, crafty knave, turns this perfection advantageously to his purpose, for having found where a Hare relieves, and being unprepared with engines, the reeving purse-net, or elastic wire, to secure every muese and track, ambiguous which to prefer, breathes but on the turf, or spits his saliva on some neighbouring clod or stone, or bending spray. Madam, on return, disdains those roads, sensible of the stain; others to pursue, that harbour certain death: Fatal retreat! There falls experienced Puffs! (pride of the fair Sportsman) undistinguished and unknown!---Methinks I hear you commiserate her, but how should it be otherwise? Can animals explore insidious

dious man's designs, or pervade his crafty wiles?

A word on the breeding of Hares, and I shall proceed to the several parts of hunting them. Some are of opinion Hares propagate but once a year; I am inclined to think, from February to the end of harvest, they breed often, otherwise I cannot account for the plenty there are.

The Does bring two, and frequently but one. I have seen three, but very rare. I once discoursed as arrant a Pot-hunter as ever England bred, that lived on the borders of South Wales, and had not scrupled to kill a Buck or Doe at any season for fifty years together, who affirmed he never saw or killed a female Hare that had, or gave suck to three, in his life.

The Doe makes choice of some thick dry brake, high grass, clover, or standing corn, to kindle in; her paps come forwarder under her belly than almost any quadrupede; she does not long suckle her young,

young, if she did, and had many, the udder would be drawn too big, and lie inconvenient in running. She brings forth different from the Coney, her offspring being completely furred and quick-fighted, the instant they are dropped.

It is a remark at the death of a Leveret, if there are white hairs on the forehead there is another of the same breed; I have seen three found by the harvest-men near of a size, and not one of them had a star; wherefore I am inclined to believe it a vulgar error.

The three Leverets were the most in number I ever saw, that in appearance were the same kindling. I have heard among Sportsmen (remarkable for the marvellous) of six or seven young ones at once, but, from such strangers to truth, I never could bring myself to credit it. A certain Baronet, long since dead, delighted in getting a set of Huntsmen and Fishermen together, than both of whom there are not greater liars under the canopy of Heaven,

Heaven, purely for the satisfaction of out-lying them.

It is a received opinion among Naturalists, that a Hare seldom lives above seven years, especially the Buck, and that when either is killed, another comes and occupies the place; whence happens the Proverb, *The more Hares you kill, the more you will have to hunt*, for when Buck and Doe, live undisturbed together a little time, they suffer no stranger to reside within their limits*.

There is also a well experienced truth, that some places are remarkable for being seldom without Hares, and others (though as likely in human conjecture as possible) seldom with any. Whether it is any particular excellence in the feed, situation for

* I am surprized the Author did not here introduce the notion, mentioned by Xenophon, and confirmed by Pliny, of Hares conceiving again before they bring forth their first young. Sir Thomas Brown, in his Treatise on Vulgar Errors, (a Work in which he would be naturally cautious of introducing the marvellous,) asserts this circumstance from his own observation.

forming

forming advantageously for warmth, hearing or seeing, that induces them to prefer certain parts to others, or that on the death of a Buck or Doe, another succeeds, and they possess their usual circle, I do not pretend to reconcile. So much for Hares. Now for the Dogs and Huntsman, both of whom it will be necessary to suppose in the field, whether kennel or pack does not signify* : It must be understood in the language of Hunters, it is a kennel of Hounds, but twenty or a hundred couple of Beagles make but a pack.

* This is a distinction entirely obsolete.



L E T T E R V.

*Of TRAILING and STARTING, with
DIRECTIONS to the HUNTSMAN.*

 Are Hunting commences about Michaelmas, and should end (would Gentlemen encourage the breed) the middle of February. As I have supposed the Huntsman abroad, and Dogs cast off, we may as well imagine one or other has made a challenge.

For trailing no rules can be laid down with certainty, it depends on the judgment of the Huntsman, and his just know-

knowledge of the several good and bad properties of his Dogs. A kennel of of the best Hounds in Great Britain, are not (I may affirm cannot be) all alike: Some are good for trailing and starting; others excellent when the Hare is on foot; others again, for hitting off defaults, running the double, or hot foil, or making good the hard ways.

Some Huntsmen, the instant they find where a Hare has relieved, trouble themselves not at all about trailing to her, but proceed with the company to threshing the hedges for a wide compass, many of whom, being so sparing of their pains, as often beat over, as beat a Hare up. For my part, trailing fairly and starting, I think, the nicest part of the whole pastime, provided wind and weather permit.

It is an undetermined point at trail or cold hunting, whether the Dogs challenge from any particular effluvia that transpired from the feet of a Hare, or remains of breath, that in her feeding

and exercise intermixed with and soiled the pasture and herbage. Was it from the foot alone, the moist path would be easier to challenge upon than the verdant sward. I have heard sturdy Casuists on both sides, but so void of sense and reason, little more than the strongest arm has determined the point. In my opinion, notwithstanding the majority may be against me, I confess myself prejudiced in favour of the latter.

If the Hounds challenge on the relief, it is a point of judgment not to let them puzzle and stick, but to rate them together, and to make it good round the fences the sooner the better. Now the Huntsman must depend absolutely upon his Dogs; the tender nosed Hound generally hits it first, and is very often unjustly deemed a babbler, because a tougher Dog does not make good what he opens upon; whereas the difference too often is, that one Hound's nose is so exquisitely delicate, as to enjoy a scent twice as stale as another.

Observe

Observe Damfel, or loquacious Dainty, open cheerily, the whole pack run in, not one, for want of equal talents, approves. But as they proceed to warmer scent, if Truman or Ruler (staunch old Counsellors, never known to give opinion, but certainty, the effect of long experience) gravely undertake to peruse the case, and, on due consideration, challenge, but in single notes, the whole kennel (in science Brethren and Collegues) from every quarter hurry, and with general yelp confirm the sound report; whilst the assiduous Huntsman, glad at heart, in oratory of his own, proclaims it good.

It is surprizing what a notable confidence presides among Hounds, in proportion to the reality of each others assurances. The most rigid sincere person upon the earth cannot detest or less credit the notorious cheat or liar, than a staunch Hound one that opens false, or spends his tongue free to little purpose,

You

You may tell me the comparison is unnatural; but what can be more like the Hound that sticks a long time and continues opening upon one spot, than the man who is a tedious while telling a Canterbury tale, or talks perpetually upon part of a subject.

What like the Babbler more than he who prates and rattles upon all subjects with confidence, and understands no one.

The notes of the Hounds are certain language in the ears of the Huntsman, and what he depends upon more than the judgment of all his friends in the field.

According to the length of time a Hare has been gone to form, do they more or less assure him of their likelihood to start. At the most distant part of her morning's exercise, where the tenderest nosed Dog can but touch of the scent, the true musical Hound opens single; perhaps a long holding note, or (according to the Dog) only what some people call a chop. As they gather on towards her, each old Sophister confirms

confirms his first opinion by an additional note, and doubles his tongue. When near her form, and the scent lies warm and strong, all double and treble their notes.

Beware of the counter-trail, which may happen when Dogs are cast off, so as to challenge about the middle of her works, or nearer the form than the feed; there the scent lies so equal, that the Dogs, over eager and busy, often hit the heel-way, or draw amiss: This the Huntsman must judge of by the notes his Dogs first challenge in. If they double and carry it on counter, they will soon signify their error, by opening only single; for instead of the scent lying hotter, and encreasing upon their noses, it is the contrary, and dwindles to no scent at all.

Young Hares tread more deep and heavy ^{/*} than old ones, because the younger

* "The scent of young Hares is stronger than that of full grown ones, for their limbs being tender, the whole body drags on the ground.—At full moon the tail is most irregular for rejoicing, in the light they play together, and throwing themselves make long intervals." XENOPHON.

they

they are the weaker the joints. At full moon they make most work, and go a great distance, relieving upon any sort of feed; especially that which grows within shade of the hedge-rows and trees. At this time Buck and Doe often associate together.

Another point must be observed, that all Hares do not leave an equal degree of scent. The down Hares leave the least. Enclosure, woodland, and marshy Hares the most, especially the latter forms in the plashy ground, or near the river side or wet ditch; she leaves a strong scent, being commonly distemp'ered and unhealthy.

The reason low-land Hares smell stronger than the down Hares, proceeds from the superior rankness of their food, and the effluvia in woods and inclosures, being far better defended from wind and air than on the bleak downs.

All Hares leave more scent going to than from relief, and never smell so strong, as when they pasture on young corn.

corn, which requires so little consideration to account for, I shall for brevity's sake omit it, and return to the Huntsman, who we will suppose on good trail, and the Hounds doubling and trebling.

About this time I suppose he is endeavouring to judge whereabouts she may fit; if he is clever and lucky in this particular, it not only proceeds from esteem, but that desirable token of it field-money, which makes many a man neglect his Dogs, too much, in good trail, to myope about in the hedges and brakes, in expectation of a so-ho! To espy a Hare no rules can be laid down, she generally forms uncertain; whoever looks for her must have the idea of a Hare seated strongly pictured in his mind.

They very seldom chuse to form in high woods in autumn, because the leaves, acorns, and beech-mast, are continually falling; and in wet weather drops from the trees disturb them. They rather prefer the dry brake, hedge, or stubble.

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In January, February, and March, Gentlemen hunt in some parts till the twenty-fifth, they seat most uncertain, and wander such a vast circuit, an indifferent Huntsman may trail all day long, and not start. What adds to their uncertain forming, besides the season of bucking, is, they are so liable under warm dry hedges and brambles, to be pestered with Pismires, or molested with Vipers, and such vermin, that they prefer the open fields and plowed lands.

Let us imagine, that by this time the Huntsman has cried, so-ho ! Observe how the Heroes press together, and parley over the imagined victim. Pride of their eager hearts, and glory of the field ! How each (e'er she leaps from form) wisely pronounces or size or gender. The unexperienced youth, with eyes convulsed, and phyz distort and pale, in imperfect, hasty stammers, proclaims a flaming Bitch ; whilst some graver Sire (whom age and experience bid be positive) with paralytic nods, and aspect sour, portend-

portending contradiction, affirms she is small and young, learned, sage! Others, in joyful confusion, amaze, and suspense, scarce distinguish whether it is a Hare or not. The Huntsman, on whom for superior knowledge each dependent is, from maxims of his own, arbitrarily decides the sex. But to such Wiseacres, who pretend with certainty from the whiteness of one part, or redness of another, to distinguish Buck from Doe, it may be said, there is but male and female; and the man, who never saw a Hare in his life, but declares his opinion at random, it is a toss up if he is not as often right as the wisest of them. But to proceed, as we have imagined a so-ho! we may as well suppose she is actually on foot. Hark! the hills and woods resound the loud acclaim.

Now the leaden-heeled Hind and brawny Peasant, with hob-nailed shoone, labour o'er the clod; the insect world tremble at their tread, the hardy Woodman speeds from toil, the Plowman quits

the unfinished furrow; all scamper o'er the plain, multiplying as they go. Some armed with clubs or staves, in leathern jerkins clad; others the flail or dung-fork wield, and in frocks of white or azure hue (succinct for speed) terrific seem. Each generous heart disdains to lay behind. Now no distinction rules. The King, the Keiser, the Lord, the Hind Fellows alike, and Competitors in the field. Now Huntsman lay in your Dogs well, and rather whisper than bel- low to them, till they undertake it, and go on full cry. Follow yourself at a due distance, and, as occasion requires, re- cheat them; if you have not a horn call them two or three times together, softly! softly! for nought but general emulation reigns, Sire with Son, and Son with Sire contend; impetuous drive the Dogs. Beware the unexperienced Sportsman, whether on foot or horseback, be sure check his forwardness, many people think a chief part of hunting consists in hollowing loud, and running, or riding hard,

hard, but they are mistaken, and such persons, gentle or simple, must not be offended if the Huntsman swears at them, he has a right to do so. No tongue can be allowed but his, nor, at this time, no foot more forward than his own.

A closeness on the Dogs, it is well known, hurries them too much, being apt of themselves, in their first heat of mettle, to over-shoot the Game. Many hours sad sport has happened from driving the Hounds too fast, and confounding them with the hollowing of the company, or a noisy blockhead of a Huntsman or Whipper-in.

As Pufs takes her circuit, judgment is often made of her gender. A Buck gives suspicion by beating the hard paths, stoney highways, and taking a ring of a large extent in proportion to the compass of his feed and exercise, which may be guessed at, from the quantity of ground the Dogs trailed over. It being worthy of notice, that in the progress of the chace, a Hare will go over great part of
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the trailed land, and visit her works of the preceding night and morning, unless she takes endways, which after a ring or so, a Buck is apt to do; and loiter a vast way on fresh ground, without offering to return.

The Doe now and then doubles in a short space, and seldom holds an end, unless knit; or at the end of the season has kindled. At such times she often runs forward, and scarce ever returns to her young, or escapes with life; being naturally weak and unfit for fatigue.

Yet notwithstanding all that can be advanced, both sexes regulate their conduct, much according to the season and weather. After a rainy night, in a woody country, neither Buck nor Doe cares to keep the covert, the wet and drops that hang on the sprays offend them; therefore they hold the highways or stoney lanes, for as the scent naturally lies strong, they beat the roads that take the least: Not that a Hare judges upon what soil the
scent

scent lies weakest, it is her ears that chiefly direct her; for the Hounds being oftener at default on the hard paths than the turf, she finds herself not so closely pursued, by being not much alarmed with the continued cry of the Dogs at her heels. The larger the cry, the more she is terrified, and faster she speeds, the certain effect of which is a heart broke sooner than with a kennel, in number and goodness equal, that spent their tongues less free.

The same principle directs her to seek the covert in autumn, when the ground is dry, and wind bleak and cold at north or east; then Puss runs the paths that are covered with leaves, which are so continually falling and blowing about, the best Hounds can make but little of her; therefore her alarms being not of long continuance, but seldom and short, she rests contented where she is least disturbed.

If a Hare is trailing to form, on that depends great part of the success of the hunt;

hunt; if she is beat up, the first ring is a foundation for the succeeding pastime, all the tucks and doubles she afterwards makes, being, in a great measure, like the first.

According to the ground she runs, the Fieldmen are to station themselves, no two are to stand prating together, let each pursue the method he thinks best for assisting the Dogs, and his own diversion. This is the time to give proof of good judgment.

If any persons are lying back, or guarding the foil, I recommend standing alone, quiet and private as possible. Above all, observe the wind. Whoever sits in the wind, hundred to one he does not see the Hare, unless, at a great distance, she drops back, or leaps aside, for the reasons before observed.

On sight of the Hare, and she happens to *quat*, silence will be an argument of great prudence; if the Dogs are at default, let them remain so, but if she goes forward, and will speed the single view
hollow,

hollow, if the Huntsman is within hearing, is allowable, in order to encourage and give him information what part she bears for.

Beware, above all things, the vile practice of hollowing off the Hounds, to lay them in after a view; leaving unhaunted ground is the worst thing can possibly happen. Besides, it not only spoils the Dogs, and accustoms them at every fault to listen for the hollow, but it is foul sport and condemnable.

I hinted some time past, the Huntsman should, by all means, go on the first ring, a deal depends on his knowledge of it in the course of Hunting, and as he follows, it cannot be amiss to smooth here and there with his foot*, several parts

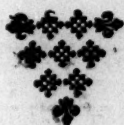
* These letters, which seem calculated for some very strongly inclosed country, agree with Xenophon's account of hunting in the mountainous and woody country of Greece; the horse in both seem entirely to be useless.

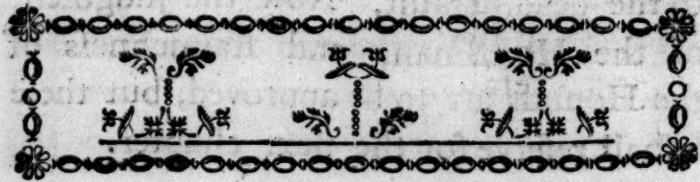
of the circuit the Hare makes, especially under gates, stiles, entrances, and endings of bye-lanes and highways; as often as time and the soil will admit.

By this means (if she doubles) he will certainly prick her upon some of those places again and again, and be of singular use to the Hounds, in drawing the hot foil. As he pricks her, let him brush it out, and re-smooth the places; this is the best method of treading a foil, and if done with judgment, no Hare that holds her foiling can escape, if the Huntsman is allowed to put it in practice.

It is a rule among Sportsmen, when a Hare runs the double, to set people to it backwards, in order to meet, and oblige her to take fresh ground, the consequence of which often has been, that having met and hooped her, she has redoubled back a few rod, and leaped off into some hedge or brake, and there *quat*, till the Dogs (confounded in the midst of two equal

equal burning heats) pass her and come
to the dead default. Now the judgment
of the Huntsman, and staunchness of
the Hounds are to be approved, but these
I shall reserve for the next chapter.





L E T T E R VI.

Of the DEFAULT, with some CAUTIONS; also of marvellous TALES of HARES at Default.

♦♦♦♦HE chief considerations at default
 ♦ T ♦ are, how long the Hare has been
 ♦♦♦♦ on foot, and how far the Hounds
 make it good? If she has not been run
 half her time (as near as judgment can be
 made) the Huntsman must try expedi-
 tiously a wide circle, changing his Dogs
 hard and quick on the highways and so
 persist in trying circle within circle, till
he

he returns to the place the Dogs threw up at. On the other hand, if she has been drove hard three parts of her time, or is near dead run, she will only leap off a few rods, and *quat*, until one or other of the Dogs jumps upon her. Therefore, in such case, the Huntsman needs only to try a small circle, not nimble but slow and sure, with great caution and care, for the compass being so little, he has no occasion to draw so hasty about as if twice as large.

Take heed of talking too loud to the Hounds, I have heard some fellows in an harsh tone, instead of cherishing, rate and confound them; there are Dogs of shy fearful tempers that will scarce bear speaking to. Give me a fellow of everlasting patience and good temper, that does not hunt because it is his business, but loves it naturally; one with a moderate voice and clear, that speaks to an old Hound at default, quick, but not noisy, and cherishes him nimbly, very often, and in a tone that enforces life
and

and courage, and compels him to stop perpetually.

Beware unhaunted ground, the inconvenience attending it, will be too apparent; avoid likewise the prevailing fault of leaving the recovery to endeavour to prick; it is not the Huntsman's business, but the company in the field; therefore he should not, upon any account, attempt it. For whilst he is myoping about, the Dogs throw up, not one in twenty has his nose to the ground. If it happens to be a long dead default, pay some regard, Huntsman, to the tender-nosed babbling Dog you disregarded in the morning; the delicacy of his nostrils may be susceptible of the scent a long time later than a stauncher Hound. You have said, such and such a Dog deserves hanging, he will open at nothing at all say you; but beware, my friend, if it is not the contrary, and owing to his superior excellence of scenting. For as I already observed, a Hare that relieved at twelve at night, the tender Hound you condemn, will challenge cheerily
next

next morning, and in the present disheartening case, if he does but open, it may encourage some stauncher Hotind to run in and stoop; which, after a long tedious default, he would not otherwise do. I have known Huntsmen so distressed, to make their Dogs try and stoop (when it has been found which way the Hare has baulked them) that they have rung an old Hound's ears so cleverly, he has roared as if he had hit upon a burning scent, which has invited the pack together, and given them such spirits, every Dog has stooped and tried it.

How numerous are the marvellous stories of Hares at default, tending chiefly to aggrandise their extensive capacity and cunning. Some we read of, when hard pressed, that have started fresh Hares, and *quatted* in their forms; others climbed upon quickset hedges, and ran a long way upon the top, then leaped off, and baulked the Dogs. Some have made to furze-bushes and leaped from bush to bush, like Squirrels from spray

spray to spray, by which means the Hounds have been at irrecoverable defaults; because I never experienced such craft and policy, it would be wrong to deny the reality of it: But, faith, I smile to read or hear of Hares, that played such pranks with design or on purpose.

I have seen instances of their dropping back, and seating again in the same forms, also of vaulting, running through houses, creeping into sheep-cotes, and in open countries, of holding the sheep-blemish, and intermixing with the flock; but most of those tricks are done when a Hare is harrassed out of her senses, and not by pure contrivance and design.

I will venture to affirm, if a Hare has any cunning at all, she never shews it so much (being never more safe) than when she continues the foil, or traverses her ring over and over.

I laugh at the simpleton, that does not consider it is a poor Hare's extraordinary fear, not the effect of judgment, that drives and provokes her to such rash and danger-

dangerous attempts; and shall think the man shallow brained himself that contends for the contrary.

On recovery, judgment may be made from the time the Hare has run, and time she has *quat*, how long she may be likely to stand; the Huntsman is never to quit the default, whilst day-light and weather permit: If the Hare is not killed or taken up, there is no good reason why it is not to be hit off, and it should be a standing maxim, that it is ever as easy to recover a lost Hare as to start a fresh one.

By a long *quat*, after a moderate hunt, a Hare often becomes stiff, therefore the Hunters should press in upon the Dogs, especially in covert; many Hares are eat up by the Hounds for want of forming some such judgment, and then the simple Huntsman damns and swears at the Dogs; whereas his own desert should be a cudgel for his stupidity, the Hounds being en-

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titled

tituled to every Hare they hunt; it is the chief reward of their labour and merit.

It is diverting to hear country fellows, on sight of a Hare, cry out she is all over in a sweat, which is a monstrous ignorance. The most indifferent Sportsmen know to the contrary, the least proof not being to be found on the nicest examination, no more than of a Dog or Cat's sweating.

There is another prevailing notion*, very vulgar, much talked of, and less understood, that the longer a Hare has been hunted, the weaker the scent grows. I never found such an alteration, and if any judgment is allowed to be made from the behaviour of the Hounds, the old staunch Dogs will be found to rate on, towards the conclusion of the hunt,

See the former Essay, page 19.

with additional vigour, not from decay of scent, but the contrary; whence they become, every inch they go, more sensible of their near approach to the Hare, than all the Hunters in the field.

But should it be maintained, the smell does really decrease, the more a Hare is pressed, what can it be owing to? To lay it down as fact, without offering some reason, is certainly a very arbitrary determination. Is it because she is run out of wind? If that is allowed, Casuists, who maintain Hounds hunt the foot, must give up the argument. For what reason can be assigned why a Hare's feet, immediately before her death, do not leave as strong and equal scent as at starting.

Hares, or other creatures, hard run, perform their inspiration and expiration very quick, at least six times in proportion for once they otherwise would, if cool and not urged. Now if six expira-

tions, under severe pursuit, are equal to one, when a Hare is just started, what difference can there be in the scent?

It may be alledged, the scent lies stronger at first, because it makes its return from a full stomach, or that at starting, the lungs having not suffered much distention, she breathes freer, which by running low to the earth, intermixes better with the herbage. On the other hand, that a Hare long hunted runs high, and of course emits her breath farther off from the surface, therefore more liable to be sooner separated, and overcome by wind and air.

To the first part I answer, the faster a Hare runs, the longer stretches; therefore the lower she lies to the ground, but the farther the Hounds are behind; and her breath (though expired ever so free) remains a long time, in proportion to the distance, before the Dogs come up to enjoy it.

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In the second place, the hard hunted Hare makes her stretches shorter, which brings her body naturally more upright and high from the surface, and the scent hereby is more liable to be sooner overcome by wind and weather. But, then, as she breathes quick in proportion, as I just said, and shortens her pace in a sensible degree, the Hounds, so much as she shortens, so much do they hasten, being drawn on by an increasing scent, even until Madam feels them at her heels.

Another reason, more natural and easy than either of the aforesaid, why a Hare, towards the end of the hunt, is often difficult to be killed, is, that if she holds her circuit, she confines her works in a much shorter compass, doubles here and there over and over; shifts, redoubles, and tries all places for rest and security, making a deal of foiling in a little space, which variety of equal scent puzzles the Dogs exceedingly.

But

But this is discourse the illiterate Huntsman troubles himself little about, his chief study and height of genius extending little farther than to that most desirable excellence of hollowing loud, and winding the streight horn, and talking to his Dogs in an unintelligible jargon, that a Hottentot would blush to be master of.

So much for Hare-hunting. If you meet with any of my sentiments that agree with your own, or that give the least satisfactory information, I am satisfied. You know I live in the woodland country, and write like such a one; my Huntsman is obliged to be always on foot, and a nimble one. The properties requisite to make a good one, are, as before is hinted, everlasting patience, indefatigableness, a good heel, tolerable musical voice, and a natural love for Hounds and Hunting. Lying tongues the honestest carry, but if they do not impose on their
Masters

Masters it may be pardoned. Hare-hunting is a fine recreation, and, for innumerable reasons, worthy of being followed, but often such hard exercise on foot, that were boys put apprentice to it, not one in fifty would serve out his time.





E R R A T A.

- Page 21 of Preface, ad note. For *Amor*, read *Amor*.
 25 of the Work, line 1. For *suffer*, read *suffered*.
 47, line 9. For *hollowings*, read *hollowings*.
 62, line 10. Omit *no*.
 64, line 19. For *smth*, read *smooth*.
 76, line 14. For *ulcerate*, read *ulcerated*.
 15. There *are*, read *there is*.
 Note, line 5. *Xenoxbon*, read *Xenophon*.
 79, line 19. For *dependance*, read *dependence*.
 81, line 8. After *and at*, add *the*.
 82, line 19. For *the*, read *they*.
 83, line 13. For *possitive*, read *positive*.
 95, line 11. For *substance*, read *subistence*.
 103, line 14. *The three*, omit *The*.
 109, line 11. For *Collegues*, read *Colleague*.
 112, line 6. For *osteness*, read *osteness*.
 117, line 11. For *has happened*, read *have happened*.
 119, line 14. For *seperated*, read *separated*.

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Page 9 of 10

A circular postmark from New York, dated May 17, 1896. The text "NEW YORK" is at the top, "MAY 17" is in the center, and "1896" is at the bottom. The postmark is stamped over the right side of the document.

